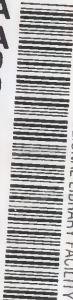


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HISTORY  
OF THE  
FRENCH REVOLUTION,  
ITS  
CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES.

BY  
F. MACLEAN ROWAN.

---

**"Ils veulent être libres et ils ne savent pas être justes."—SIEYÈS.**

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# HISTORY

OF

## THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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### CHAPTER I.

Apparent Tranquillity—Composition of the Legislative Assembly—The King and the Assembly—Opposition of the Court—Pétion Mayor of Paris—Efforts of the Royalists at Home and Abroad—The Emigrants refuse to return—Desertion of Officers from the Army—Decrees against the Emigrants—The King's *Veto*—Decree against the "Refractory" Clergy—Encouragement given to the publication of Irreligious Works—Critical situation of the King—Increased by the Hostile Manifestations of Foreign Powers—The Ministers—Their Resignation—New Ministry—War decreed—"Patriotism"—Distress of the Queen—Discontent in the Provinces.

ANOTHER short interval of hope and joy ensued, when the Constituent Assembly ceded its place to the Legislative Assembly, (the name assumed by the new chamber.) There was a change and new swearing, and this always seemed to appease the multitude for a moment.

The constitution being the work of the middle classes, these, in the feeling of their strength, thought it inviolable, and forgot that there were still two parties in the state—those who had lost every thing, and those who had yet every thing to gain—who were not going to sit down in quiet content and veneration for laws which were but the production of the ambition of their fellows, and which, if one class could make, another could break with equal right. When the law of the land is despoiled of its sanctity, and becomes but the expression of the will of the people—when that will changes (and what is more fickle ?) the law must change with it, and indeed ceases to be law. And so it was with this new

constitution of France, which seemed to be so long-lived that even the king and queen based on it hopes of tranquillity and better days, but which did not survive more than a year.

The Legislative Assembly was composed of seven hundred and forty-five deputies, among whom were none of the *ancien régime*. Yet royalty had in this assembly perhaps more sincere adherents than in the former one; for all those who were devoted to the new constitution clung to the king, as their safeguard against the republicanism of their opponents. The division of parties remained the same as in the Constituent Assembly, but the principles were different. Deputies of the right, and the extreme right, were generally denominated *Feuillans*, and those of the left, *Jacobins*. The *Feuillans* were the representatives of the *Bourgeoisie*, who were, as we have seen, devoted to the constitution, which was their work and their profit; they were supported out of the house by the National Guard, the departmental authorities, the club of the *Feuillans*, and *Lafayette*. Their most remarkable members were *Dumas*, *Girardin*, *Lemontey*, *Ramond*, *Beugnot*, *Pastoret*, *Vaublanc*, &c.; the extreme right was equally attached to the constitution, though not so persuaded of its perfection, and inclining more towards the king. What were the principles of the left may be learned from its appellation of *Jacobin*, better than they can be described in distinct terms, for in all probability these men would have been at a great loss to define what was their object. This party was also called the *Girondins*, after those among its members who took the lead, *Vergniaud*, *Gaudet*, *Gensonné*, and *Isnard*, deputies of the *Gironde*. Among the other prominent members, were *Brissot*, who had made himself conspicuous as editor of the journal

called *The Patriot*, and as orator in the Jacobin Club; and Condorcet, known by his philosophical works. These were supported out of the chamber by Pétion, a cold and dissimulating republican.

The extreme left, occupying benches a little more raised than the rest, and taking from this the name of the *Mountain*, were the representatives of the multitude and of the clubs. Their principal orators were Bazère, Chabot, and Merlin de Thionville, and they were always ready to second the Girondins in any revolutionary measures. Their chief allies without were Robespierre, who now ruled over the Jacobins, and Danton, surnamed the Mirabeau of the populace, who was the presiding genius of the Cordelier Club, where he was supported by Camille Desmoulins and Fabre d'Eglantine. The Cordelier Club was chiefly composed of persons belonging to the trading classes, and was the ruler and director of the mob of the *faubourgs*, headed by the brewer Santerre.

The centre of the assembly was a weak and powerless party, and, like all weakness, tended to strengthen the bad. It voted most frequently with the left.

The first relations of the king and the assembly were any thing but friendly. The deputation which was sent to the king to announce that the Legislative Assembly was constituted, was not received by his majesty in person, but was told by the minister of justice that it would be received the next day. This was, however, an insult to the sovereignty of the people, which the new-born majesty of the assembly could not brook, and to retaliate it was decreed that the king, the hereditary functionary of the kingdom, should no longer be addressed by the title of Sire and Majesty. "I am only astonished," said one of the deputies, (Gandet,) "that the National Assembly should ever have hesitated as to whether it

should preserve these titles. The word *Sire* signifies *Seigneur*, a word which belonged to the feudal government, which no longer exists. As to that of Majesty, it ought only to be employed in speaking of God, or of the people." The decree was, however, very soon after again annulled; and, when the king appeared in the assembly, there was a show of good feeling on both sides.

The adherents of the ancient state of things, who, by not being represented in the assembly, were excluded from all open opposition to the Revolution, were thereby led still further to attach their hopes to foreign aid, and are said to have used covert means from within to push things to extremes, thinking that they would thus be afforded greater opportunities for resistance. This party regarded all the conflicting factions of the state with equal dislike, and hated Lafayette as heartily as it did Robespierre and Pétion, while, nevertheless, it did every thing in its power to weaken the Feuillans, and to strengthen the Jacobins, "because," it is said to have expressed, "in the day of its triumph it would have to reckon with the Feuillans, and not with the Jacobins." Thus when the constitutionalists, who still adored Lafayette, proposed him for the mayoralty of Paris, the court was greatly adverse to his success, and preferred Pétion, to the great delight of the Jacobins, who saw in Lafayette a second Cromwell. The queen seems to have had a similar judgment of his ambition, as she used to say, "Lafayette wants to be Mayor of Paris, in order to be Mayor of the Palace." Pétion's election was an immense accession of power to the Girondins, and he used his position to subvert the constitution and the throne.

The royalists having gained nothing by the aid of the journals, and the frequenters of the gallery of the assembly and of the clubs, which were in their pay, exerted



all their influence to animate the religious disturbances, and were in this point more successful; for in Gévaudan, Poitou, and Brittany, civil war was on the point of breaking out. Their measures were as hostile out of France. The Emperor and the King of Prussia, seeing Louis accept the constitution with apparent sincerity, had taken no further steps, and had even given assurances of their pacific intentions. England seemed determined to remain neutral; and Spain, Sweden, and Russia did not manifest any decided hostility. But the emigrants, nevertheless, continued their warlike preparations. The king's brothers protested against his acceptance of the constitution, which they asserted was a forced one, and the tide of emigration swelled in consequence. The royalist journals boasted of the number of officers that had quitted the army, and of the fifteen thousand gentlemen that were assembled at Coblenz, and who were to be joined by four thousand foreign volunteers.

The king nowise approved of these vain boastings, and was fully alive to the danger to which they exposed him, in the midst of a suspicious people, of the clamors of the clubs and the journals, which were already speaking of treason, and in the face of an assembly which was stimulated to take measures which he was determined not to sanction. Besides, he was desirous that the emigrants should return, as that was the only means of rallying a party round the court, which would be sufficiently powerful to resist the other parties, or at least to keep them somewhat in check. But even a proclamation, issued 14th October, 1791, assuring them of the sincerity of his adhesion to the constitution, and engaging them to return home, produced no effect. They persisted in treating the king's orders as forced, and the emigration continued to increase.

When the minister of war announced that nineteen hundred officers had deserted from the army, the popular exasperation was great, and the assembly determined to take the most vigorous measures against the emigrants. The Constituent Assembly had limited itself to pronouncing the forfeiture of their places to all the functionaries who left the country, and levying a triple contribution on the property of all emigrants, but the new assembly had recourse to severer measures.

Various measures were proposed, which were all violently combated by the constitutionalists, but the opposite party gained the victory, and it was decreed on the 9th November that the Comte de Provence, the king's eldest brother, should be summoned to re-enter the kingdom within two months, under penalty of forfeiting his right to the regency. The French assembled beyond the Rhine were accused of treason, and it was decreed that if they were still collected in a body on the 1st January, 1792, they should be prosecuted as criminals and punished with death, and their revenues confiscated for the benefit of the state, without, however, prejudicing the rights of their wives and children.

The king sanctioned the first decree, but affixed his *veto* to the second, which gave great offence to the assembly, notwithstanding a new proclamation addressed to the emigrants, calling upon them to return to their duties, was issued the next day by the king; the populace and the assembly persisted in seeing in his non-acceptance of the decree a proof of his sympathy with, and approval of, the assembly at Coblenz, and the king's authority to issue a proclamation was even questioned. The clubs were, of course, as usual violent and tumultuous. "In refusing to sanction the decree against the emigrants," said Camille Desmoulins, "the king sanc-

tions their criminal projects. . . . In a short time the nation will find itself placed between the necessity of allowing itself to be butchered or of disobeying, that is to say, of choosing between servitude and insurrection. The king's pretended sincerity is but derision."

The assembly now directed its attacks against the counter-revolutionists, towards the refractory clergy, and were in this restrained by no religious scruples, for it was even more imbued with the principles of Voltaire than the preceding assembly, and the Girondins did not pretend to conceal them, but expressed their belief in words singularly characteristic of the times: "The law is our God, we do not recognise any other," they said; as if there could be a law without a God.\*

It was decreed (29th November, 1791) that the members of the clergy who had not taken the oaths required by the constitution, should be deprived of their pensions, which had been given them as an indemnity for the sale of their property; that they should no longer be allowed to exercise their holy functions, even in private houses; that they were declared suspected of entertaining thoughts of sedition, and were placed under the particular surveillance of the authorities; that if any disturbances should take place in the commune inhabited by a refractory priest, the departmental authorities should be bound to force him to change his residence; and the decree ended with a clause exhorting "all good spirits to renew their efforts and multiply their instructions against fanaticism, in order to enlighten the people that they may avoid the snares laid for them by these pretended religious opinions," declaring "that the National Assembly will regard as a public benefit works

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\*The Pagans even placed their laws under the safeguard of their divinities.

and books written to the level of the country people upon this important matter, and will cause these works to be printed and distributed at the expense of the state, and will recompense the writers of them.”\* It is needless to add that France was soon inundated with works which, not satisfied with attacking the refractory priests, contributed to destroy all religion; and, to add to the horrors of the Revolution, religion, which in men’s minds always suffers for the faults of its followers, was brought into still farther disrepute by the conduct of the constitutional clergy, who, availing themselves of the state of the public mind, and regardless of their vows, sought and obtained leave to marry, to the great disgust of all good Catholics.

The constitutional party were greatly opposed to those iniquitous measures, and fierce struggles took place in the assembly, which afforded an excellent opportunity for the display of the fiery revolutionary eloquence of the Girondins, many of whom, and particularly Isnard, were indeed betrayed into revealing more of their secret thoughts, than was quite consistent with their pretended love of liberty, for some of the measures proposed equalled if not surpassed in despotism and tyranny those of the most despotic of French monarchs.

When the decree was passed which presented these measures in a greatly modified character, the Directory of Paris implored the king to oppose it, and Louis, in affixing his *veto*, said that he would rather die than sanction such a decree. But though the king, in applying his *veto* to decrees in direct violation of the constitution he had sworn to defend, was acting perfectly in accordance with that constitution, he was nevertheless con-

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\* *Histoire Parlementaire.*

sidered as a traitor by the people, who, notwithstanding all their swearing and all their enthusiasm, now never dreamed of obeying any other law than their own passions.

His opposition to the decree regarding the emigrants, it was said, brought on foreign war, and his opposition to the decree concerning the priests, added civil war to this evil ; and indeed such was the king's position, that every step he took must have been a false one. His resignation was not appreciated, and not thought to be sincere, and even the miserable semblance of power which the constitution had left him, was regarded with an envious and suspicious eye.

In the mean while the foreign powers, either excited by the struggles between the king and the assembly, or by the solicitations of the court, began to resume their hostile intentions. Austria, Prussia, and Piedmont levied troops ; Spain and Russia threatened, and the king of Sweden, who had just obtained a victory over the powerful nobility of his own country, was anxious to lead an army which was to espouse the cause of the rights of kings. The alarm of the " patriots," and the suspicions against the king, augmented in consequence of these movements, and Louis XVI. endeavored to appease them by issuing (20th December, 1791,) a declaration to the Electors of Treves and Mayence, intimating that if they did not take measures to prevent the assembling of emigrants, which was going on within their territory, they would be considered as enemies of France. At the same time he wrote to the emperor to request him to use his authority with these two princes, and declared to the assembly that if these foreign powers did not afford him satisfaction, he would declare war against them. But the electors allowed the emigrants

to assemble ; the Diet of Ratisbon demanded the reinstatement of the *possessionary princes*, in Alsace ; and the emperor declared that if the electors were attacked he would support them. The king, in consequence hereof, announced to the assembly that if the emigrants were not dispersed before the 15th January, he would have recourse to arms, and this resolution was highly applauded, and procured for a moment so great a popularity for the court, that the queen on going to the opera was greeted with all the demonstrations of loyalty she was wont to receive in her days of power and greatness. But this was the last time that any feeling of the kind was evinced. The desire for equality became every day stronger, and the journals and the club orators did every thing in their power to teach the people to look upon the existence of a functionary of the state, placed so high above their level, as an insult to the dignity of human nature.

It was decreed in the assembly that the usual homage which was paid to the king on the first day of the year, a custom which was deeply rooted in the habits of the country, should be discontinued ; and the assembly in their relations with the king continued to evince as little courtesy and respect as possible, while they exacted for themselves much more than they had a right to expect. This was probably greatly owing to the little respect the courtiers were inclined voluntarily to afford them, for unfortunately this sad period shows us faults on all sides, and the courtiers were not the least active in preparing, by their misjudging zeal, humiliations for their royal master.

The first days of the year 1792 were occupied in animated discussions on the war, particularly in the Jacobin and Cordelier Clubs, where, strange to say, Robes-

pierre advocated peace, while the Feuillans on the contrary were all for war. In the assembly a decree was passed accusing the brothers of the king and the Prince of Condé of conspiracy, and pronouncing the Comte de Provence's forfeiture of his right to the regency, in consequence of his not acting in conformity with the decree summoning him to return. Three armies were raised and placed under the command of Luckner, Lafayette, and Rochambeau; but the troops were disorganized and undisciplined, the officers disaffected, the fortresses dismantled, and the arsenals empty. However, measures to remedy these evils were undertaken with great ardor and no less confusion, and notwithstanding the resistance of the Mountain, which, fearing a war proposed by Louis XVI., prepared by the Feuillans, and directed by Lafayette, maintained the same opinions as the Jacobins and the Cordeliers, war became the universal theme, and even the Girondins hoped that it might lead to some happy conclusion of the Revolution.

But the king, for whose support the foreign powers had alone taken up arms, continued to be distrusted, and was particularly obnoxious because by his two *veto*s he had stamped the acts of the assembly with illegality. Among his ministers, who were accused of intrigues against the constitution, and of correspondence with the emigrants, one alone possessed the confidence of the assembly: this was the young Narbonne, who had obtained his place through the influence of the Feuillans, and was actively employed in reorganizing the army. But this minister, who was feared by the king on account of his popularity and his ambition, was in constant opposition with the two other ministers, Bertrand de Molleville, a royalist, minister of the marine, and Délessart, minister for foreign affairs, who was accused of having

suscitated the coalition against France, in order to intimidate the people. Narbonne was supported by the Girondins, but was nevertheless dismissed by the king, and the Girondins, who were anxious to place men of their own party in the ministry, then accused Bertrand and Delessart of treason. The assembly declared that the former, who was a confidant of the queen, and had taken many counter-revolutionary measures in the interior, had lost the confidence of the assembly, and Delessart, who was convicted of having professed unconstitutional principles in his correspondence with the Austrian minister, Prince Kaunitz, was placed before the high court of Orleans, (10th March, 1792,) which had been recently established for trying cases of high treason.\*

All the other ministers tendered their resignation, and the king, alarmed at the hostility evinced by the chamber, determined to choose their successors from the ranks of the left, which dominated in the assembly. He accordingly, on the 21th March, gave the war department to Servan, the finances to Clavière, and the home department to Roland, all three conspicuous Girondins, but particularly Roland, a well-informed, austere, and courageous man, who, however, owes his celebrity to his wife, whose ardent mind and enthusiastic republicanism rendered her the life and soul of the party. To these ministers were joined Lacoste for the marine department, Duranthon as minister of justice, and Dumouriez as minister of foreign affairs. The latter was a man of considerable talent and great ambition, to gratify which he changed his opinion as often as he found it convenient; until this moment, however, without obtaining any prom-

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\* The term *lèse nation* had been substituted for the usual *lèse majesté*.



inent position. Hated by the Feuillans, amicably connected with the Gironde, and beloved by the Jacobins, he was the most important member of the new ministry, and he gained the king's confidence by his audacity, his coolness, his resoluteness, and his never-failing resources, and also because he persuaded Louis that he sought popularity in order to be able to save the throne.

On taking office Dumouriez immediately assumed a firm and decided tone in his diplomatic intercourse with foreign powers, and war became inevitable. Leopold of Austria, who was of a most pacific temper, had been succeeded by his nephew, Francis II., who had taken the title of King of Hungary and Bohemia, while awaiting his election to the empire, and who being young and warlike, replied to Dumouriez's remonstrances by demanding the restoration of the French monarchy on the basis of the declaration of 23d June, the re-establishment of the ancient orders of the state, the restitution of the property of the clergy, &c., &c. This was tantamount to a declaration of war. France was indignant, and the king, repairing to the assembly, (20th April,) where Dumouriez read a report, exposing the progress and the results of the negotiations, proposed, according to the terms of the constitution, war against the King of Hungary and Bohemia. The proposition was received with acclamations, and a war was decreed, which for twenty-five years was to deluge Europe with blood.

We must now take a rapid view of the state of the people in Paris, and throughout France. Seeing that war was inevitable, Robespierre and his coadjutors, in order to meet all the dangers which might result to them from the events of the war, excited the people, both in their club orations and newspapers, to arm, proposing pikes as the weapon most suited to them; accordingly

all the smiths were set to work, and hard work it was to satisfy the inpouring demands of the patriots for deadly weapons. To these arms was added, as an insignia, the red nightcap, which had first been worn by Pétion, and which, bearing a resemblance to the Phrygian cap of liberty, was considered a more worthy covering for the patriots of France than the hat, the vile badge of aristocracy, and the patriots from this period gloried in the name of *Sansculottes*, which was first given them in derision by the court. Pikes were not only made, but were brandished and exercised, and even the *Dames de la Halle* (the fish-women of Paris) are said to have formed an Amazon corps, and to have exercised in the Champ de Mars. These military evolutions were mixed with the usual insults to the king and queen, which now seemed a necessary accompaniment to every demonstration of so-called patriotism; and the unhappy queen one day speaking to Dumouriez, said, "I am in the greatest grief; I dare not approach the windows which look into the gardens: last night I went to take the air at one of the windows towards the yard; a cannonier on guard immediately apostrophized me in the coarsest way, and added, 'How pleased I should be to see your head on the point of my bayonet!' In the hateful garden I see on the one side a man mounted on a chair, and reading aloud all kinds of horrors about us; on the other side a military man or an *abbé* dragged through one of the ponds, while he is covered with blows and insults; and, regardless of all this, others are playing at battledore and shuttlecock, or taking a quiet walk. What a place of residence! what a people!"\*

This year is also remarkable for the introduction of

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\* *Mémoires de Dumouriez.*

the guillotine, which was to play so prominent a part in the government of France, when that government was directed by Robespierre, the same man who, when member of the Constituent Assembly, had proposed the abolition of capital punishment, because it was repugnant to his mild nature to see the blood of human beings flowing upon a scaffold.

While this instrument of death, the true emblem of the *tender-heartedness* of that period, and the invention of which seems as a foreboding of the reign of terror, was being introduced into Paris, and was decreed by the assembly for universal use, less legal weapons were being employed in the south. The inhabitants of Avignon did not approve of the revolutionary government which had been established among them, nor of their forced annexation to France, and in Provence and Languedoc the zealous Catholics continued to uphold their priests and to oppose the Revolution, and the most bloody frays took place among them and the *sansculottes*, who were as zealous in the cause of *their* creed.

The citizens of Marseilles were particularly noted for their revolutionary fanaticism, and they sent a deputation, headed by the young Barbaroux, surnamed *Le beau* Barbaroux, to express their sympathy for their fellow *sansculottes* of Paris, and their willingness to aid them whenever they should think proper to overthrow the tyrants of the assembly; for this body, in which voices were often raised to enforce order and recommend moderation and even justice, had now become exceedingly obnoxious to the people.

## CHAPTER II.

Opening of the War disastrous—Violent Denunciations of the Revolutionists—The Assembly violates the New-born Constitution—The King refuses his Sanction to their Decrees—Roland's Letter to the King—Dismissal of the Girondin Ministers—Dumouriez retires from the Ministry and joins the Army—Despair of the King—Lafayette accuses the Jacobins—Violent Proceedings of the Jacobins—Dreadful Procession of the Armed Mob—Their Petition to the Assembly—They rush into the Palace—Insult the King—At length retire—Lafayette repairs to Paris—His Offers to the King—Hopes of the Royal Family raised by the progress of the Foreign Armies—General Excitement—Debates of the Assembly—Exultation of the Clubs.

DUMOURIEZ, after having declared war, determined not to wait an attack within the frontiers of France, but to surprise Europe with the invasion and conquest of Belgium, which had always been an unruly appendage of Austria. The first movements of the French, however, were decidedly unsuccessful. The three columns which moved towards Tournay and Mons fled at the first sight of the enemy; and though the treason has never been proved, it is impossible to ascribe conduct so contrary to the brave character of the French to any other cause. Fortunately for the revolutionists, the Austrians did not avail themselves of their advantages; their generals committed several blunders, and remained on the defensive until they should be joined by the Prussians. As for the French, this event only tended still farther to augment their want of discipline, and Rochambeau, who commanded the three defeated columns, took his discharge. Of the two remaining generals, Luckner, who commanded the army which occupied the line from the Moselle to the Jura mountains, was a good cavalry officer, but by no means capacitated for the position which he then held, and Lafayette, whose army spread from Dunkirk to the Moselle, was absorbed by the

struggles of the parties within ; and the hostilities without were limited to a few insignificant skirmishes.

The defeat of Tournay and Mons, which had filled the emigrants with new hope, had caused the greatest consternation among the revolutionists, and the Jacobins, who thought they saw all their fears justified, became daily more violent. During three years, Marat, the most hideous monster of this epoch, had not ceased to demand, in his newspaper, "five or six hundred heads to ensure the happiness and tranquillity of France ;" and he now raised his voice from the deep cellars in which he hid himself from the persecuting eye of the authorities, to renew his atrocious advice. "The first thing the army has to do," he said, "is to massacre its generals ;" and his words were listened to without disgust, because he and his fellows had filled the breast of every man with the most horrid suspicions against all those who held any powerful position, and this suspicion, joined to all the other wild passions that the Revolution had let loose, now evinced itself in constant denunciations.

Every movement of the court, of the refractory clergy, and of the king's constitutional guard,\* was translated into treason by the newspapers, those vile and dangerous, but most powerful instruments in the hands of faction ; and the people, now armed, seemed more than ever determined to obey none but those who shared in their passions, and made them forget their own sufferings in the excitement of inflicting sufferings upon others. That there must have been most dreadful suffering, we cannot doubt, when we reflect that those who were wont, by peaceable work, to provide

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\* It was chiefly composed of royalists, and had consisted of from eighteen hundred to six thousand men.

for the wants of their families, were now haranguing in the clubs, brandishing pikes in the Champ de Mars, listening to the exciting orations of some street orator, or vociferating in the galleries of the assembly.

The assembly had now also come to the point when it found it necessary openly to violate the new-born Constitution. It declared itself permanent, and decreed—First, that the authorities of the different departments were empowered to pronounce sentence of transportation against refractory priests, on the simple denunciation of twenty citizens, (27th May, 1792 ;) secondly, that the king's constitutional guards should be disbanded and immediately recomposed, and that Brissac, the commander of this guard, should appear before the high court of Orleans, (29th May ;) and, thirdly, that there should be formed at Paris, on occasion of the festival of the 14th of July, a camp of twenty thousand confederates from the departments, who were to protect the capital against the invasion of the foreigners.

This last measure was proposed by the minister Servan, without the knowledge of the king, and was intended still farther to strengthen the Girondins, who already, by means of Mayor Pétion, may be said to have commanded the capital. The king assented to the disbanding of his guard, but was determined not to recompose a new one, though he thus remained entirely at the mercy of the revolutionists. To the two other decrees he resolved to refuse his sanction, and was encouraged in his resistance by seeing that they were immediately opposed by a part of his ministry and by a petition from eight thousand national guards of Paris.

The Gironde then determined to come to an explanation with the king, even at the risk of a rupture, and Roland, instigated by his wife, wrote a letter to the king,

after her dictation, which, always supported by his wife, he insisted upon communicating to his majesty, notwithstanding the refusal of his colleagues to sign it, on account of its harshness of tone and want of proper respect. After having explained to the king his position, arising out of the attempts made by the royalists, who relied upon the feelings which they naturally supposed must animate royalty, and having laid before his majesty a *tableau* of the Revolution, such as it was in the eyes of the enthusiastic woman who had dictated the letter, it urges the king to assent to the two decrees presented to him, because an open and sincere adoption of the Revolution by the king can alone save the country from incalculable woes. . . . "All feelings have taken the character of passions. . . . The fermentation is extreme, it will break out in the most terrific manner, unless a well-founded reliance on the intentions of your majesty can at last calm it; but this reliance cannot be established upon protestations alone, it must be based upon facts. . . . It is no longer time to recoil; there is no longer any possibility of temporizing; the Revolution is accomplished in all minds, and will be realized at the price of blood, and cemented by blood, if prudence does not forestall the evils which it is yet time to prevent. . . . A short time more lost, and the grieving people will see in their king the friend and accomplice of conspirators."

This letter was read by Roland himself to the king, who listened to it with great patience, but having consulted the queen and Dumouriez, (12th June, 1792,) immediately after dismissed the three Girondin ministers. But Dumouriez, upon whom rested all the king's hopes, also insisted upon the acceptance of the decrees, which the king would on no account sanction, and without which he said he could do nothing, and in conse-

quence retired from the ministry and joined the army. This last stroke was more than the poor king could bear, and, despairing of his own fate, he fell into a kind of stupor, from which alone the tender entreaties and energetic remonstrances of the queen could at times rouse him. Madame Campan describes him as having passed ten days without uttering any words, except the few which were necessary at the game of backgammon, which he played with the Princess Elizabeth in the evening.

The Girondin ministers were succeeded by Legard, Chambonas, and Terrier-Monciel, of the Feuillans party, men who had neither intellectual strength themselves, nor a powerful party to back them, and whose choice, therefore, gave rise to the supposition that the king had given up all hopes of bettering his position by constitutional means. At this period the king did, indeed, send a secret messenger, Mallet-Dupan, to Austria and Prussia, to represent the necessity of the two sovereigns preceding their armies by a manifesto, in which they should declare that they had not armed themselves against the nation, but merely against a faction, and that they had in view no dismemberment of France, but merely adopted the cause of the legitimate government against anarchy, without pretending to impose laws upon any one, but that they would hold the assembly and all the authorities responsible for any violence offered against the person of the king.\*

The fermentation produced by the dismissal of the Gironde ministers was indeed such as to give rise to all kinds of fears. The Jacobins declared that it was the signal for the counter-revolution, and the assembly decreed that the nation's regret accompanied the ministers ;

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\* Bertrand de Molleville.



and in violation of the promise given to the king by Roland, to keep his letter secret, it was sent to all the eighty-three departments.

The constitutionalists saw the storm preparing by the Girondins, and headed by Barnave, Malouet, Duport, and Lafayette, sought to gain the confidence of the court, with the desire of saving the throne. But the Feuillans were weak and disunited, and the queen, though confiding in Barnave, continued her extreme repugnance for Lafayette, whose genius was by no means sufficiently strong to conquer all the difficulties which were thus raised between him and the fulfilment of his good intentions. Notwithstanding, however, the weakness of his position, he declared war against the Jacobins, in a letter addressed to the assembly, (18th June, 1792,) in which he says : . . . . " It is this faction that has caused all the disturbances ; and I loudly accuse it of this ! Organized like a separate empire, led blindly by ambitious chiefs, this sect forms a separate corporation in the midst of the French people, whose power it usurps, by subjugating their representatives and their functionaries . . . . In order that we, the soldiers of liberty, may fight with success, and die for its benefit, it is necessary that the domination of the clubs should be annihilated by you, and be made to give way to the empire of the laws ; that their usurpations should give way to the firm and independent action of the constituted authorities ; that their disorganizing maxims should be superseded by the principles of liberty ; and that their delirious fury be replaced by the calm and constant courage of a nation who knows its rights, and is determined to defend them. . . . "

But this courageous step only hastened the downfall of the Feuillans, who, with their devotion to the constitution, were placed between two enemies, the Jacobins

and the royalists, and were doomed to be victims of whichever of these was victorious.

The Jacobins, determined upon having the decrees which the king had rejected, and still farther exasperated by the letter of Lafayette, now resolved to have recourse to an insurrection. The people, led on by their revolutionary passions, had at their head men who participated in these passions, without dominating over them in any other way, either by intellect or by more defined views. Such were Santerre, the brewer, who commanded the faubourg St. Antoine; Alexander, who commanded a battalion of the faubourg St. Marceau; the butcher Legendre, the goldsmith Rossignol, Fourmier, Sergeant, and others, who, though mere mediocrities, possessed that brute courage and that reckless wildness which made them recoil before no excess for the attainment of their object, the destruction of those they called aristocrats, by which they, in fact, meant all those who were in their way, whatever their position. These men were connected with Robespierre, Pétion, Chabot, and other leaders of the clubs, the assembly, and the municipality; and, according to their advice, they resolved to march their armed multitude against the assembly and the palace, under pretext of presenting petitions, and of celebrating the anniversary of the day of the *Jeu de Paume*.

The municipality being asked if the mob might be permitted to appear in arms, refused; but Santerre, nevertheless, declared that nothing should prevent the men of the faubourgs from marching, and he encouraged his followers, by assuring them that the National Guard would not receive orders to act, and that M. Pétion would be there. Indeed, so little reason was there to fear the opposition of the latter, that, when the directory

of the department invited the mayor to disperse the mob, he answered, "That, according to the manner in which the executive power acted, it would not be astonishing if the public indignation produced some lamentable event." The only precautions he took, were to order the commander of the National Guards to double the number of the men on guard, and to command the six battalions quartered in the two faubourgs not to leave their barracks. But the battalions with their cannon, and the multitude with their pikes, refused to obey the orders of the municipality, and on the 20th of June put themselves in motion towards the Rue St. Honoré, carrying with them standards, emblems, and devices, frightfully expressive of their wishes and intentions. Besides two immense tables, containing the laws, surrounded by dancing women and children, carrying branches of poplar in their hands, there were a pair of old black breeches extended on a cross staff, with the motto, "Tremble, tyrants; the *sansculottes* are coming." On another staff was stuck a bullock's heart, pierced through by a pike, and with the inscription, "Aristocrat's heart;" and many other sanguinary devices, intermixed with tri-colored ribands streaming as small pennants from the pikeheads.

When they arrived before the *Salle de Manège*, the assembly was in a state of great agitation, caused by Roederer, the procureur syndic of the department, having announced that a numerous and armed mob was in motion, and imploring the assembly to disperse it, according to the law that prohibited more than twenty citizens at a time presenting a petition. But Vergniaud protested against the scenes of the Champ de Mars being renewed; and as the assembly had before allowed petitions to be presented by armed troops, it was deter-

mined that the people should be admitted. Impatient at being detained so long, they rushed in before this permission could be intimated to them, but again withdrew on seeing the displeasure of the assembly. When they re-entered, their numbers had swelled to thirty thousand, who filed off in pairs, singing their frightful *Ca ira*, dancing and crying "Down with the *veto*, Down with the priests, The aristocrats *à la lanterne*, *Vive les sans-culottes*," and brandishing their weapons and their hideous and ridiculous emblems before the deputies, whose hearts sickened at the sight of the demons some among them had raised. Their petition, which was couched in the most audacious terms, repeated the sense of all the petitions of that epoch. "The people are ready; they only wait for you. They are disposed to avail themselves of stupendous means to execute the second article of the declaration of rights: *Resistance to oppression*. Let the small number among you, who do not unite in your and our wishes, purge the land of liberty of their presence, and repair to Coblenz. . . . Examine into the causes of our sufferings, and if they emanate from the executive, let it be annihilated."

When the procession left the *Salle de Manège*, it was ordered to pass into the Rue St. Honoré, through the courtyard belonging to the building. Instead of doing this, they forced an entrance into the Place du Carrousel, in front of the palace, where they were arrested by the National Guards, but Santerre coming up with cannon, and the municipal officers ordering the doors to be opened, the crowd rushed into the palace, and ascended the great staircase, carrying in their arms a cannon. "No obstacles, no resistance met them, neither at the entrance of the palace, nor in the apartments; not a

man was there to defend them, not a national guard at his post, not a door barricaded.”\*

The king was in his study, surrounded only by a few faithful servants and National Guards, who were begging him to present himself to the people ; to this he had assented without any hesitation, when the door was broken down by the furious mob, before whom he appeared perfectly tranquil, saying, “ Here I am.” His servants and the National Guard were obliged to surround him to prevent his being crushed to death ; and at last succeeded in placing him on a table in the embrasure of a window, before which the mob placed itself, brandishing its arms and crying out, “ Down with the *veto*, recall the ministers, give us the decree against the priests, the camp of twenty thousand men.” The butcher Legendre having obtained silence, said, “ Sir . . . . yes, sir, listen to us ; you are made for that . . . . you are a deceiver . . . you have always deceived us . . . you are deceiving us ; but take care of yourself, the measure is full, and the people are tired of being your toy.”

Louis, whose strength consisted in Christian submission, continued to show the greatest firmness and dignity in the presence of these savages, who insulted him in every way, and menaced him with their arms, while he merely replied to all their clamors, “ I will do what the constitution orders me to do ;” but the tumult continued to augment, and the king was at length forced to put on the hideous red cap of the Jacobins to satisfy these wretches, who delighted in his humiliations.

The royalists maintain that the queen, who was in another room, was insulted in like manner ; while those who endeavor to extenuate some of the atrocities of the Revolution, say that she and the dauphin were respect-

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\* Roederer, *Chronique des Cinquante Jours*.

fully saluted, when the mob at last, upon Pétion's summons, filed off to leave the palace. "Return to your homes," said Pétion; "by remaining here longer, you will give the enemies of the public welfare occasion to misrepresent your respectable intentions. Go, you have acted with the pride and dignity of freemen."

Unhappy creatures! it was such words as these that made them the perpetrators of the most atrocious crimes! The palace was not evacuated before ten o'clock at night, but the king and royal family had, ere that, effected their retreat into their private apartments.

All that was left of good feeling in France was deeply hurt at the proceedings of the 20th June. The whole of the constitutional party, a great number of the National Guards, and the directories of seventy-six departments, protested energetically against them. From the city of Paris an address with no less than twenty thousand signatures was presented to the king, and the directory of the department commenced a prosecution against the authors of the insurrection, and against Pétion, who had almost openly supported it. Lafayette's indignation was extreme. Taking upon himself to be the spokesman of the army, he immediately repaired to Paris, determined to make a last effort to unite the court and the constitutionalists against the Jacobins. Presenting himself before the assembly, he alluded to his letter of the 18th, and expressed the indignant feelings of the army with regard to the violence and illegalities committed on the 20th. "I implore the assembly," said he, "to order the instigators of those acts to be promptly punished, and to destroy a sect that usurps the sovereign power, tyrannizes over the citizens, and whose public debates but too clearly indicate the intentions of their leaders."

A violent discussion ensued in the assembly, in which

Lafayette was in his turn attacked, and accused of having left the army without leave; all that he could obtain was to have his petition referred to a committee. At court he was not more successful. The king received him with coldness, and the queen with her usual distrust, and whether it were that his intentions were suspected, or that his measures were not considered sufficiently powerful, his services were rejected. But Lafayette, who seems really to have been inspired by a sincere desire to save the king and the constitution, had interviews with those who participated in these feelings, and it was decided that if they could assemble as many as three hundred men, they would march against the Jacobins. On the appointed evening, however, no more than thirty persons appeared at the place of meeting, and Lafayette was obliged to return to the army without having effected any of his intentions. But being as devoted to the cause as ever, he continued to offer to the king the assistance of the armies under him and Luckner, whom he had entirely won. To all his offers the king merely replied, "that the best advice that could be given to M. de Lafayette, was always to remain the scarecrow of the factious, by exercising ably his profession as a general."\*

The hopes of the court continued to be centred in the foreign armies, which now began to muster in more formidable array, Prussia as well as Piedmont having declared against France, and eighty thousand men being assembled at Coblenz, under command of the Duke of Brunswick, while Luckner and Lafayette, with their disorganized troops, left without reinforcements, were obliged to remain on the defensive. The royalist party exulted, and the queen, who was made acquainted with

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\* *Histoire Parlementaire.*

all the intended steps of the emigrants, spoke with the greatest confidence of their approach, and said she should be liberated in a month.\*

The excitement caused by the news of the march of the Prussian troops soon obliterated the remembrance of the 20th of June, and the people, driven to extremities, seeing that no measures were taken by the government, prepared for new violence.

The greatest confusion prevailed throughout France. The constitution had already become an empty form. In all quarters the proper measures to be taken were projected and discussed, and the assembly, participating in all the fears of the people, was occupied in concerting plans of defence against the court. The ministers were questioned as to what measures the king had to propose in lieu of the twenty thousand confederates the assembly had judged necessary for the safety of the capital, and having answered by a proposal of levying forty-two battalions of volunteers, to form a reserve camp near Soissons, the assembly decreed that those among the battalions which would have to march through Paris on their way thither, should make a halt there, to take part in the celebration of the fête of the federation which was to take place on the 14th of July. By this artifice the assembly gained the point it had in view, when proposing the gathering of the twenty thousand confederates, for, as the king assented, an insurrectionary army was thus placed at its disposal. Still further to ensure themselves against resistance, it was determined that the staff of the National Guards of all the large cities which had shown a decided tendency towards the legal authorities, should be dissolved and re-elected, (30th June, 1792,) and it was proposed that in

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\* Madame Campan.



order to quiet the popular mind, the moment the crisis should become imminent, the assembly should declare that the country was in danger.

The discussion of this proposition was opened by Vergniaud, in a speech calculated to widen the breach between the king and the assembly, and still farther to exasperate the people against the former. "It was in the name of the king," he said, "to seek revenge for the dignity of the king, to assist the king, that the French princes had made the courts of Europe rise, that the treaty of Pilnitz had been signed, that Austria and Prussia had had recourse to arms. . . . All the evils which they endeavor to accumulate on our heads, all the danger which we have to fear, emanate from this source,—the name of the king alone is the pretext for them—the cause of them. But I read in the constitution, 'If the king places himself at the head of an army, and directs its force against the nation, or if he does not oppose by a formal act any similar enterprise which shall be attempted in his name, he shall be regarded as having abdicated the throne.'" Having then examined what would be the nature of such a formal act, and having proved that the king had not taken any such step, still supposing that the king would defend himself by saying, that he had acted perfectly in accordance with the constitution, he added: "Oh king, you have only feigned love for the laws, in order to maintain the power of braving them; and love for the constitution, lest you should be hurled from the throne, where you wish to remain only to destroy that constitution; do you now think to deceive us any longer by your hypocritical protestations?" Having pointed out all the misdeeds he supposed the king to have committed, and all the wholesome measures he had left undone, he concluded, "Man, whom the generosity of

Frenchmen has been unable to touch, and whom love of despotism alone can warm, you are no longer any part of the constitution you have so unworthily violated, of that people you have so basely betrayed."

This speech was followed by a still more violent one from Brissot, who, pointing out the dangers that threatened the country, said that it was in the Tuileries they must seek for the source from which they sprang; that it was there that the blow which was to save France must be struck. And he represented the nation as a mere puppet in the hands of the cabinet!

The veil was rent; no one could doubt that the next step of the Gironde would be to propose that the king be deposed, and the exultation of the clubs, and their party the mob, was indescribable, while the alarm of those who were peaceably inclined was as great.

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### CHAPTER III.

Proffered Resignation of the Ministers—The Assembly declares the Country in danger—General enlistment of Volunteers—Preparations for an Insurrection—Manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick—Flight of the Royal Family proposed—Rejected by the Queen—Insurrectional Committee—Marat—The coming Insurrection—Impeachment of Lafayette—The dreadful 10th of August.

ON the 10th July the ministers appeared before the assembly to expose the perilous situation of the kingdom and of the army, and to declare that under such a state of things, or rather during such a complete overthrow of all order, it was impossible for them to maintain life and movement in a vast body, every limb of which was paralyzed—to defend the monarchy against that anarchy, which threatened to swallow up every

thing—and that in consequence they tendered their resignation.

This resignation was not accepted, but the next day (11th July) the assembly declared *the country in danger*, and from that moment, according to a decree previously passed, all the civil authorities declared themselves in a state of permanent surveillance, all the National Guards were put in movement, and amphitheatres were raised in all the public places, where municipal officers received on a table supported by drums, the names of all those who came to enlist themselves as volunteers, and which are said to have amounted to 15,000 daily.\*

The declaration of the assembly produced the greatest excitement; the whole nation was soon in arms; but persisted in seeing in the king and the court their worst enemies. The destruction of these was the main point to be accomplished, and six thousand confederates from the departments hastened to the capital, declaring that they would not again leave Paris before the enemies were crushed; and the assembly took every measure to second them, by removing all the troops both of the line and of the militia that could possibly protect the king, and by nominating an extraordinary committee to inquire into his acts, to decide whether they were such as to involve the forfeiture of his crown, (*sa déchéance*.)

The Mountain, which was now the ruling party in the assembly, prepared an insurrection, conjointly with the chiefs of the confederates and with the leaders of the Jacobin and Cordelier clubs, among whom were Danton, Desmoulins, and Santerre; and in which Pétion, who had been suspended, in consequence of the affair of the 20th June, but again reinstated in his functions, and the whole council of the commune had pro-

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\* Thiers.

mised their passive co-operation. The vanguard of the insurrectional army was to be composed of the five hundred Marseillaise, who had acquired for themselves a great reputation for sanguinary valor, and who had introduced a civic song, which henceforward became the hymn of the Revolution, and is now known throughout Europe by the name of the Marseillaise.\*

In the midst of this effervescence, which was farther augmented by the religious disturbances, which were increasing on all points, the manifesto with which the Duke of Brunswick opened the campaign arrived; it was couched in the terms proposed by Louis XVI., through Mallet Dupan, and ended with a fearful threat against Paris, in case the nation did not return to its duty; this raised the popular fury to its greatest height. The whole people clamored for the *déchéance* of the king. Pétion presented a petition to this effect to the assembly, loudly accused the king of treason, and called for the convocation of a national convention. Notwithstanding these threatening appearances, the court remained in a state of incredible security. The king had disavowed any connection with the foreign powers, who had indeed exaggerated the instructions he had given, but his ministers attempted no means of resistance to the invading army, and the court repulsed the offers of assistance which were proffered on all sides. At last however the king, rousing himself from the torpor in which he was generally sunk, agreed to fly from the country in accordance with a plan admirably concerted by Lafayette, Lally Tollendal, (who had returned from England,) Liancourt, and other devoted royalists, and

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\* The words and music of this song, which originated with the army on the Rhine, are the composition of Rouget Delisle, an officer of the Engineers, quartered at Huningue.

which offered every security ; but the queen strenuously refused to commit herself to the hands of those who had caused her so much misery, and the whole plan was given up.\* New plans were then concerted by others, and while the court was busied with these hopes, and seemed sure of some means of escape, the people, intent upon their destruction, were only pausing for want of one chief leader, and of a pretext for breaking loose. The Jacobins had named a committee of five, known under the name of the insurrectional committee, the more promptly and secretly to devise measures. In this committee, which associated with itself all those men who had as yet made themselves most conspicuous by the fierceness and lawlessness of their principles, it was expressed that if the suspicion of having a deputy murdered could be cast upon the court, that would afford the most admirable pretext for falling upon the king ; two deputies present, Grangeneuve and Chabot, immediately offered themselves as victims. The plan for their assassination was concerted, but when Grangeneuve, on the appointed night, arrived at the place of meeting, where the most fearful deed was to be committed for the most fearful purpose, Chabot was not there ; and Grangeneuve's heroic patriotism quailed before the idea of committing suicide in order to propagate a calumny,—so he went home.† Can any thing more frightfully depict the perversion of thought and mind—of every feeling of right and wrong, so common at this period, among a people still styling itself Christian ?

Among those who were looked to as leaders, and among whom was to be chosen the great chief of the meditated insurrection, none presented so many qualifications as Marat. Camille Desmoulins, though cynical,

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\* *Mémoire de Mons. Huc.* Lacretelle's *Histoire du 18me Siècle.* † *T'biens.*

audacious, and full of ardor, had neither sufficient vigor of lungs for a public orator, nor sufficient activity and strength for the chief of a party. Robespierre, though exercising a great influence over the Jacobin Club, by the reputation he had obtained for incorruptible integrity, no one knows how or why, and by his eloquence which he gained by borrowing the thoughts and expressions of other men—Robespierre was not the man, for Robespierre was a selfish, cowardly, and even physically weak mediocrity, and he could not therefore lead into the field a furious multitude. Danton, with his athletic form, his thundering voice, his brutal passions, so fully in accordance with those of the multitude—Danton was a monster—a fitting worker of wickedness; but what is the instrument which executes, compared with the head that plans, and who could surpass the “atrocious intelligence” of Marat? This man had first made himself known as writer of the paper *L'Ami du Peuple*, (the Friend of the People,) and had by his atrocious provocatives to murder, awakened the horror and disgust of all those who were not entirely lost to all good feeling. At the commencement of the Revolution he was attached to the stables of the Comte d'Artois, as veterinary surgeon, and was then already an object of horror, from the frightful ugliness of his appearance. His short stature contrasted painfully with the immense size of his head, and this disproportion, together with his fiery eye, his livid color, and the disgusting slovenliness of his dress made Marat indeed a loathsome object in outward form. But when the bonds that held the evil spirits of society in subjection were rent asunder, and Marat had revealed that his hideous body was the habitation of a soul as hideous, the man seemed transformed into a fiend, and the contempt, the horror, the disgust which he inspired,

the dark caverns in which he was obliged to hide himself from the eye of justice, seemed only to inflame that insane love of one part of his fellow-citizens, which evinced itself by the most ardent thirst for the blood of others. The uncouth and wild-looking Marat, in his filthy rags, with his contempt for all established rules, and his hatred of all established order, seems the hideous personification of this period of dark crimes. "Give me," said he, "two hundred Neapolitans, armed with daggers, and a muff on their left arm for a shield; with them I will traverse France, and the Revolution shall be accomplished." These words were listened to with a shudder, and yet how soon was he to find numberless accomplices in such deeds! But the moment was not yet come, and therefore Marat also was rejected as a leader.

In the mean time the people were openly making preparations for the coming struggle, and placards were stuck on the walls of Paris, threatening instant destruction to those who should dare to fire upon the people. On the 5th of August the section of the Quinze Vingts, which directed the others, determined to march; but on the representations of Pétion, who took an active part in all that was going on, though on account of his position as mayor, he was obliged to dissimulate, and who was aware that the court, acquainted with the intended movement, was prepared to resist the insurgents, this section determined to defer yet a few days, and first to issue an order, "that if the legislative assembly did not on the 9th pronounce the *déchéance* of the king, if justice and right were not done to the people, at midnight the tocsin should sound, the *générale* should beat, and all would rise at once." Forty-two sections adhered to this order, and one of them, that of Mauconseil, even went so far as to pronounce the *déchéance* of the king.

These proceedings were made known to the assembly by Roederer, and the resolution of the section *Mauconseil* was by it annulled, but the municipality withheld the decree from publication, and declared the sections *en permanence*.

On the 8th, the assembly, forced by the Jacobins, was obliged to impeach Lafayette; but, struggling to resist the violence exercised over them, a majority of four hundred and six voices against two hundred and twenty-four rejected the impeachment, and the furious people then threatened to murder all the constitutional deputies. These latter, on their side, declared "that the assembly, degraded by the hissing in the galleries, and held under subjection by the factions, could no longer be considered free, and that they would no more attend the sittings." All the deputies of the right then demanded that the federates should be sent away, but in vain, and the minister of justice announced "that the laws were powerless, and that unless the legislative body afforded the most prompt assistance, the government could no longer be held responsible."

The Jacobins, on the other side, proclaimed that the assembly could no longer be depended upon for "making the Revolution."\* "No more addresses! No more petitions! The people must rely upon its arms, and its cannon, and itself make the law." This was the signal for insurrection, and all flew to arms; but when the moment for action came, it was found that many of the heroes of the tribune were not anxious to win laurels on a field of battle. Robespierre had disappeared, Marat was hid by Danton, and Barbaroux was provided with a dose of poison in case of failure. Danton alone, whose cour-

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\* It is curious to hear allusions made to the Revolution on all occasions, as if it were a clear, definite, and even palpable object.



age and ardor grew with the excitement, thundered from the *tribune* of the Cordeliers. Having enumerated what he called the crimes, the base perfidy, and the hypocritical promises of the court, he added, "The people can now have recourse only to its own means, for the constitution is insufficient, and the assembly has absolved Lafayette; there is thus nothing left for you but to save yourselves. Hasten, then, for this very night, satellites hidden in the palace will make an assault upon us, the people, to murder us before they leave Paris to join their friends at Coblenz. Therefore save yourselves! to arms! to arms!"

At this moment the report of a musket was heard, the tocsin sounded, the drums beat, and the insurrection commenced. The insurgents were divided into three corps: the first from the Faubourg St. Marceau, under Alexander and Fournier; the second from the Faubourg St. Antoine, under Santerre and Westermann; the third, which comprised the Marseillais, assembled at the Cordeliers. A blood-red standard, borne before the insurgents, had the following inscription: "Martial law of the sovereign people against the rebellious executive," and the chief plan of the insurrection was, that commissaries chosen by the sections should unite themselves with the "commune, and either with or against their will, replace the *conseil générale*, and devise means for saving the public cause."

In the mean time, the court, trembling and undecided, though aware of the danger that threatened, scarcely knew what measures to take to avert it, and while some were advising resistance, others held the contrary opinion. At the very threshold of the king's door, the questions that were agitating the parties without were discussed, and in a no less violent way. The king was at

supper, when a scuffle was heard at the door, and Madame Campan going out to inquire the cause, saw the two national guards on duty quarrelling and fighting, one having maintained that the king was acting according to the constitution, and that he would for one defend him at the risk of his own life ; while the other said that the king impeded the only constitution that could suit a free people.

This was an alarming indication of the feelings of those who guarded the palace, among whom, indeed, there were many whose fidelity was but little to be depended upon. The most devoted servants of the king were eight or nine hundred Swiss, a gendarmerie composed of the former French guards, and about five hundred gentlemen who flocked to the palace in the hour of danger ; but these were all looked upon with little liking by the National Guards, who, with the exception of two battalions, were more devoted to the cause of the people than to that of the king. However, Mandat, who commanded them, and was warmly attached to the royal family, took the best measures for the defence of the palace, placing cannon in the three courts of the Tuileries, and stationing several battalions as advance posts, at the Louvre, the Pont Neuf, and the Grève, with orders to attack the insurgents on the flank and from the rear. These steps were taken by Mandat on his own responsibility, for the mayor had, on the preceding evening, refused to give him any orders, or to allow him a supply of gunpowder. Had the National Guards, the gendarmes, and the cannoniers been faithful, Mandat's measures would have sufficed to disperse the disorderly mob of the Faubourgs, which could never have stood the attack of a well-regulated force ; but as it was, Mandat was soon summoned before the commissaries of the sec-

tions, who had taken possession of the Hôtel de Ville, had suspended the *conseil générale*, many of whose members were in league with them, and had constituted themselves an *insurrectionary commune*. Mandat, thinking that it was a legal body before which he was called to account for the orders he had given, appeared, and was ordered to be impeached, and in the mean while sent to prison; but no sooner had he left the Hôtel de Ville than he was murdered by the infuriated mob without. Santerre was immediately named commandant in his place, and the despair and confusion at the palace augmented.

The insurgents of the Faubourg St. Antoine, fifteen thousand in number, joined to five thousand from the Faubourg St. Marceau, having driven back the battalions stationed at the Grève and the Pont Neuf, invaded the Place de Carousel, facing the Tuileries, and were joined by the gendarmes posted at the Louvre, while the cannoniers in the palace-yard, having unloaded their guns, saying that they would not fire upon the people, also took part with the multitude.

The queen and the Princess Elizabeth had not gone to bed during that anxious night, but the king had retired to his room, from which he again issued at day-break, to count the hours; and to listen to the approach of those who were coming to drive him forever from the palace of his ancestors.

At about six o'clock the beat of drums and the occasional firing of cannon announced the fearful foe, and the king, advised by those who but little understood the character of the times, in spite of the prayers of Roederer, who well understood it, and urged the royal family to seek refuge in the assembly, the king chose that moment to go down and pass the troops in review. Even during the most loyal period, the French, who

have so quick an eye for the elegant and graceful, would perhaps have found it difficult to be inspired by the sight of the unwieldy figure and undignified carriage of Louis XVI., and now that the bright halo was gone which surrounded royalty, there was a much smaller chance of his presence producing any effect: and indeed, with the exception of a few shouts of *Vive le roi* from the two faithful battalions, he was greeted with looks of contempt and offensive words, and was obliged to retreat before the cannon in the court, which were now being levelled at the palace.

On the king's return, Roederer again urged the necessity of instantly repairing to the assembly, where the sound of the tocsin had called together the deputies. The queen, seconded by some of those assembled at the palace, who were desirous of fighting to the last, affected greater calm and courage than she felt, and insisted upon remaining. "It is time," she said, "to know who is to be victorious, either the king and the constitution, or the factious;" and snatching up a pistol, she presented it to the king, telling him that now was the moment for him to show his courage.\* But the king, who was trembling for those that were dear to him, determined to follow Roederer's advice, and accompanied by the queen, his sister, and his two children, escorted by the *directoire* and some national guards, he repaired to the assembly, followed by the shouts and insults of the people, who thronged round their passage.

It was eight o'clock in the morning when Louis presented himself in the assembly, the greater number of whose members were accomplices of the wretches from whom he was flying. "I have come," said he, "to prevent the perpetration of a great crime, and I think,

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\* Roederer, *Chronique des Cinquante Jours*.

gentlemen, that I can be nowhere so safe as in the midst of you." Vergniaud, who presided, answered that the king could depend upon the firmness of the assembly; and Roederer having described the tumult raging without, the king was invited to remain, and withdrew with his family into the box usually occupied by the reporters, while the assembly ordered twenty of its members to go out and appease the people. But no sooner were they gone than a discharge of artillery was heard, and the greatest consternation took possession of all present. The king immediately exclaimed that he had forbidden the Swiss to fire. The noise without increased: it was announced that the deputies sent by the assembly were dispersed, and one of the doors of the hall was soon attacked by the mob. A number of deputies rushed from their seats to meet the assailants, and then shouted, *Vive la nation! vive la liberté! vive l'égalité!* Shouts which by the royalists are imputed to cowardice, and by the partisans of the Revolution to the enthusiasm of the moment.

The multitude had found it difficult to form in any orderly array before the Tuileries; but, led on by Westermann, formerly a corporal in a regiment of the line, and by the federates and the gendarmes, they had been enabled to break down the great entrance gate, had penetrated into the yard, where, as we have seen, they were instantly joined by the cannoniers stationed there. After the king had left, the Swiss guards stood at the windows of the palace, looking down upon the assailants, without any attempt at repelling them; the signs of an amicable understanding were soon interchanged between them, and the Swiss joined in the shouts of *Vive la nation!* The Marseillais then penetrated into the vestibule, and were ascending the staircase, when the report of a can-

non was heard, and the Swiss thinking themselves betrayed, poured a murderous volley upon those whom the moment before they were prepared to meet as friends, and then, descending bayonet in hand, drove the assailants before them, while the National Guards kept up a brisk fire from the windows.

In a few moments the palace was cleared of the invaders, and fear and consternation prevailed among the insurgents in the Place du Carrousel, when orders arrived for the Swiss not to fire. At the same moment the federates had rallied the quailing insurgents, and a fresh troop attacked the palace from another side. The devoted Swiss fell back, and for twenty minutes defended themselves against the attacks of the superior numbers; but seeing at last that resistance was useless, these "heroic defenders of expiring royalty" sought to escape by different issues, but almost all perished in the attempt. Those that remained in the palace were massacred, and the victorious mob gave themselves up to pillage and carnage, and when their ferocious appetites were appeased they rushed from the palace to the assembly, carrying with them their arms, their pillage, and their prisoners, and shouting furiously for the *déchéance* of the king, which the assembly, now as greatly feared and detested as the king, was obliged to pronounce.

The end to which had tended every movement, every word, every thought, since the first opening of the States-General, was now attained. Anarchy was legalized, and the last vestige of the ancient state of things destroyed. And now that this long-sighed-for *liberty* is attained, at the price of so many crimes, we are to see how it is used by the *sovereign people*, and what virtues are developed under its shadow.

## CHAPTER IV.

Decrees of the Assembly—Sovereignty of the Commune—Measures passed by that Body—The Heads of the Commune—A Tribunal formed for trying offences against the People—Laws passed against the Emigrants and the Priests—The Foreign Ambassadors leave Paris—The Foreign Armies cross the Frontiers—Lafayette declared a Traitor—Unlawful Proceedings of the Commune—Verdun taken—Alarm in Paris—The Massacre—Circular of the Commune—Frightful Picture—Election of Members for the Convention—Movements of the Army—Prompt Measures of Dumouriez—Battle of Valmy—Retreat of the Prussians—General Success of the French Arms.

WHILE the royal family, shut up in the close box of the reporters, were obliged to be quiescent spectators of the work of demolition going on in the assembly, the Girondins, who seem still to have been under the impression that they had been the gainers by the scenes which had just been enacted, and that they were to be the rulers of the new republic, passed the following decrees: "Considering that the dangers which threaten the country are now most imminent; that they principally arise out of the distrust felt by the people for the chief of the executive power, on account of his conduct with regard to a war commenced in his name against the constitution and the independence of the nation; that the legislative body, in the circumstances in which it has been placed by events unforeseen by the laws, cannot reconcile its fidelity to the constitution with its determination to perish under the ruins of the temple of liberty, except by having recourse to the sovereignty of the people; the National Assembly decrees:—that the French people is invited to form a national convention; that the chief of the executive power is provisionally suspended from his functions until the national convention shall have pronounced on the measures to be adopted to ensure the sovereignty of the people, and the reign

of liberty and equality ; that the king and his family are to inhabit the palace of the Luxembourg, and shall be placed under the guard of the citizens and of the law ; that the present ministers are dismissed, and that those that are to replace them are to be provisionally named by the assembly ; that the decrees already passed, but which have not been sanctioned, shall be binding as laws ; that the assembly declares itself *en seance permanente*."

But the assembly had soon to learn, that notwithstanding the downfall of the monarch, there was still a power in the state superior to its own, and that, though bearing the title of the supreme legislative body, nothing now remained for it but to follow the dictates and legalize the acts of the "commune," created by the insurgents. Even before the combat at the Tuileries was over, it had declared, by the voice of Danton, that, with regard to the extraordinary measures it had been obliged to have recourse to, it would recognise no other judge than the people, assembled in the *primary assemblies*, and the assembly, in accordance with its wishes, approved of all its acts ; declared that all Frenchmen, without exception, who had attained the age of one-and-twenty, should be *acting* citizens, and that all police regulations with regard to measures of safety against the internal as well as the external foreign foes, should be left to the municipality. Commissaries, charged with enforcing the acceptance of the new revolution, and with changing the civil and military authorities, were sent to the departments and to the armies, and Roland, Clavière, and Servan were reinstated in office, together with Monge Lebrun and Danton, the latter as minister of justice.

The commune had not awaited the decrees of the assembly, but, displaying the most extraordinary activity,



it passed about two hundred *arrêtés* a day, and usurping all power and all rights, respected none in others. It suspended the directory of the department, it transferred Louis XVI. and his family to the Temple, where these unhappy sufferers, who had been born and reared in the most sumptuous courts of Europe, were exposed to every privation, to every hardship, and to every indignity. It threw the royalist journalists into prison, and distributed their printing machines among its own creatures, to be used for disseminating its execrable principles. It ordered the demolition of all the historic monuments of France, because they "recalled to the mind the state of slavery in which the people had lived," and it named a committee of surveillance which ruled the capital through the most despotic police, and which resumed within itself all the usurpations and all the excesses of the commune.\*

The power of the mayor was completely annulled, and the whole administration changed. "The general council," says Pétion, one of those men who from promoters of these excesses, became their victims, "the general council had become a political body, regarding itself as invested with full powers, discussing the existing laws, and promulgating new ones; its constant themes were the plots it supposed existing against liberty; citizens were denounced and condemned. All deliberations were carried on with the impetuosity of enthusiasm; night and day the council held its sittings." The members of this council were by no means the *élite* of the population of Paris; almost all of them belonging to the lower classes, void of convictions as of honesty, ignorant and brutal, and full of envy and hatred for those who were superior to them in education as well as in birth and riches. At their head were Danton, Robes-

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\* Lavallée.

pierre, and Marat—Marat, who had long sighed for a dictatorship, not for the pleasure of being all-powerful, but to be intrusted with the task of purifying society. “The dictator,” he said, “ought to have a cannon-ball attached to his leg,\* in order always to be under the hands of the people ; he ought to be allowed one faculty alone, that of indicating the victims, and of ordering as their only punishment, death.” When we add to this, Danton’s maxim, that all that was possible was lawful, and Robespierre’s envious but cowardly disposition, and the sanguinary fierceness of Billaud Varennes, and Collet d’Herbois, who also belonged to the commune, the atrocity of the crimes committed by this body, in the name of justice and liberty, can no longer astonish us.

The assembly, or rather the Girondins—for since the commencement of the insurrection, not a voice had been heard from the benches of the right, and the Mountainists were identified with the insurrectionary commune—the Girondins, greatly alarmed at the increasing usurpations of this body, sought to counteract its power, by decreeing the re-establishment of the directory of Paris, but the commune opposed the measure, and threatened that if the assembly persisted in reinstating that “aristocratical body, the people would again arm themselves with vengeance.” The assembly then modified its decree, and limited the power of the directory to the mere collecting of taxes ; and farther coerced by the commune, it decreed the formation of an extraordinary tribunal, whose members were to be chosen by the sections, and against whose decisions there should be no appeal, to sit in judgment upon the traitors and conspirators whose designs had been frustrated by the people on the 10th of August. On the 23d of this month, it was

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\* This is the way in which the galley-slaves are prevented from escaping.

decreed that the property of the emigrants should be expropriated, that the dissentient priests who did not voluntarily leave the country should be transported to Guiana, and that the municipalities were authorized to visit the houses of all citizens, to ascertain that they did not contain arms, and to arrest the suspected.

In the mean time, all the ambassadors from foreign courts had left Paris, and France was considered at war with the whole of Europe; but as yet Austria, Prussia, and Piedmont alone, had come into the field. On the 19th of August, sixty thousand Prussians crossed the frontiers, while twenty thousand<sup>1</sup> Austrians marched towards Stenay, and twenty-five thousand imperial troops were directed towards Thionville and Montmedy. France had ninety-six thousand men in arms, to meet these armies; but the troops were undisciplined, and commanded by officers whose fidelity was but little to be depended upon, while the generals were without renown. The insurrection of the 10th of August had added to the confusion and weakness of the army, by dividing opinions, for while Lafayette and Luckner, who acted upon his friend's suggestion, repudiated the insurrection, and were even preparing to march against Paris, Dumouriez and his detachment of the army recognised the legality of the popular movement. The assembly declared Lafayette a traitor to his country, and, abandoned by all his supporters, the man who had so lately been the idol of France, was obliged to fly his country. He was arrested at one of the enemies' advance posts, and treated as a prisoner of war: and was for five years dragged from dungeon to dungeon.

Dumouriez was named to the command of the army of the north in his place, and Kellermann to that of the east, in the place of Luckner; but on the 20th August

Longwy was invaded by the surrounding Prussians, and it capitulated on the 24th. On the 30th, the enemy arrived before Verdun, surrounded it, and commenced the bombardment. In case this place was taken, the road to the capital lay open, and nothing could exceed the excitement which prevailed at Paris on the reception of this news, and of the capture of Longwy. Already at the first appraisal of the success of the allies, of the defection of Lafayette, and of the revolt of La Vendée, where, on the 22d August, the peasantry who adhered to the royal cause had taken possession of the town of Châtillon-sur-Sèvres, the assembly had taken prompt measures to prevent farther defection, to strengthen Paris, and had endeavored to free itself from the subjection of the commune. But in vain; this latter body also prepared means of defence, which were quite in keeping with the character of the personages who composed it, and but too fearfully adapted to prove that no despotism is worse than that of unlawful usurpers, because, conscious of the instability of their power, and of the enmities they must excite, they see no salvation but in the tyranny which paralyzes all resistance by means of the fear which it inspires. On the 29th and 30th of August the barriers were closed, carriages arrested, the streets deserted, and the commissaries of the commune, escorted by the armed sections, rendered their domiciliary visits. Every citizen who was found from home was declared suspected, and between three and four thousand individuals, nobles, ecclesiastics, people formerly belonging to the court, national guards, &c., were thrown into prison.

The executive council, composed of the ministers, were then called to the committee for general defence, to deliberate upon the measures to be taken, in this criti-

cal juncture. Some voted for waiting until the Prussians should appear under the walls of Paris, others proposed to retire to Saumur.\* Danton vehemently opposed the last proposition. "To recoil," said he, "is to destroy ourselves. We must maintain ourselves here by all means, and save ourselves by boldness. We must *frighten* the royalists!" And he accompanied these last words with a gesture that made his auditors shudder. But Danton repeated his words, and detailed his plan for striking the enemy with terror, and by making the multitude his accomplices, leaving them no hope nor refuge but in victory. All the citizens who were fit to carry arms were enrolled in regiments in the Champ de Mars, and were sent to the frontiers on the 1st September; and on the 2d, when the news of the taking of Verdun arrived, the commune seized the moment when Paris was in the greatest alarm, thinking that the enemy was already at the gates, to execute its terrible designs.

It was Sunday, but no Sabbath stillness reigned in Paris. Unholy passions raged in the hearts of the citizens, and unholy sounds rent the air. Confusion and terror produced their direst effects. Again Danton declared that boldness, and nothing but boldness, could save revolutionized France; and the commune, for whose measures he was preparing the way, replied to his appeal by cries of "To arms, citizens, to arms, the enemy is at our gates." Alarm guns were fired, the tocsin sounded, the roll of the drums was heard, and the barriers were closed; the whole town was in movement; and in the streets, some of the inhabitants, glowing with martial ardor, were hurrying to join the army, others tendered their services to work in the camp erected at Montmartre, while others moved about in disorderly and

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\* Mignet.

idle groups, terrified at all that surrounded them, and but too well prepared to believe in any atrocity which should be reported of those whom they so much feared—the members of the commune were abroad. Suddenly the report was spread that the royalists were marching against the prisons, to set the prisoners free, and then to deliver up the town to the Prussians. The train was fired. Three sections immediately decreed the death of all the prisoners, and in one instant the terrible cry, “Let us to the prisons,” was heard from one end of Paris to the other—in the streets, in the public places, in the clubs, and even in the assembly. “Let not one of our enemies survive to rejoice at our misfortunes, and to take vengeance on our wives and children,” cried one of the wild orators of the times; and these words, re-echoed on all sides, led to the result which they premeditated.

In the mean time, the intended victims were not without forebodings of the fate which awaited them, for measures had been taken to prevent the possibility of resistance, which could not have escaped their notice. The jailers in the different prisons all seemed laboring under intense anxiety; the one in the Abbaye had sent his wife and children from home early in the morning. All the prisoners had had their dinner (strange proof of the power of habit over the human mind) before the usual hour, and the knives were wanting for every cover.

The wild beasts were now goaded into fury, and the moment for letting loose their victims had arrived. Four-and-twenty priests, who had been detained at the Hôtel de Ville on account of their having refused to take the required oaths, were now placed in hackney coaches, and conveyed to the prison of the Abbaye, escorted by a detachment of Marseillais confederates, who pointed them out to the surrounding mob, as the conspirators

who were to have murdered their wives and their children, while they were sent to the frontiers. The unhappy prisoners tried to escape the insults and blows which were in consequence levelled against them, by putting up the glasses of the carriage; but this frail barrier was of no avail against their assailants, and they were made to suffer slow torture, until arrived in the yard of the Abbaye, where they were received by a still more furious multitude, headed by Maillard, who, as the carriages came up, and the victims attempted to descend, received them with the points of their pikes, until, with one exception,\* the twenty-four priests lay dead upon the ground. At this moment Billaud Varennes, the chief instigator of these inhuman acts, appeared in the midst of the murderers, and harangued them in the following words: "People, you are immolating your enemies,—you are doing your duty;" to which fearful blasphemy Maillard replied, "There is nothing more to be done here, let us on to the Carmelites." And to the church of the Carmelites they went, where two hundred priests had been incarcerated; and there, on the steps of the altar, they struck their victims, who died in a spirit worthy of the place. After having made use of their sabres, the assassins had recourse to their fire-arms, and made a general discharge into the body of the church, in the garden, at the walls, and at the trees, by climbing which some of their victims had sought safety.†

While this work was going on, Maillard returned to the Abbaye, and addressing himself to the section of the Quatre Nation, which held its sittings in one of the halls, he demanded "wine for the brave workmen who were delivering the nation from its enemies;" and

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\* The priest miraculously saved from the carnage was the Abbé Sicard, the instructor of the deaf and dumb.

† Thiers.

the trembling committee complied with his demand. Strengthened by their draught, the vile wretches then attacked the prison, and, dragging the prisoners from their cells, immolated them without distinction.

But suddenly some one of this horrid assembly of assassins, mounting upon a stool, represents to his comrades the injustice and irregularity of their proceedings; and then ensued one of those monstrous scenes which render the history of this period more disgusting than any other, where the most atrocious sinners, assuming a mocking semblance of justice and law, sat in judgment upon those whom they were previously determined to sacrifice. Maillard was chosen as president of the impromptu tribunal, and placing the jailer's book before him, the prisoners were called over according to the order in which they were there inscribed, and having been submitted to a short interrogatory, were, with a very few exceptions, handed over to the cold-blooded executioners who awaited them without, to consummate the frightful deed. In order to avoid the scenes of despair which were likely to ensue, and which even these heartless miscreants seem to have been unwilling to witness, it was proposed that the sentence of death should be understood by the words, "*Monsieur, à la Force!*"\* The first victims at the Abbaye were the Swiss guards, and among the others was Thierry, the valet de chambre of Louis XVI., whom Maillard handed over to his doom, with the words, "As the master, so are his lackeys."

While these horrid scenes were going on, the commune openly sent some among its members to recommend moderation and calmness to the people, while

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\* *La Force* was one of the prisons of Paris.



others secretly added fuel to the fire, and the words of all those who were sincerely desirous of putting a stop to the atrocities, fell unheeded upon the ears of the assassins, whose appetites increased with the blood on which they glutted.

For four days and nights this hideous work went on, and so completely was it looked upon as a kind of business by those who took part in it, as well as by those who belonged to them, that the women used to speak of carrying dinner to their husbands, "who were working at the prisons," as if they were speaking of any other kind of work. At the prison of La Force, the fearful tribunal was headed by Hébert, himself a member of the commune, and here the clemency which was shown to some is almost more revolting than the cruelty shown to others. Mademoiselle de Sombrueil, the daughter of the venerable governor of the Invalides, who was among the prisoners, pleaded with such touching love and despair for the life of her parent, that even these human hyenas relented ; but, as if ashamed of their humanity, they tinged it with their ferocity, by presenting to the young girl a goblet filled with human blood, and forcing her to drink the " blood of the aristocrats," as the price of her father's life. Another lovely woman, as celebrated for her virtues as for her beauty, and whose only crime was devotion to the queen, met with a less happy fate ; she was dragged half dead before the executioner, decked with the municipal scarf, who asked in a ferocious tone who she was. " Louisa of Savoy, princess of Lamballe," was the reply, and having then been told that she had taken part in all the plots of the court, she was bidden to swear to love liberty and equality, and to hate the king, the queen, and all royalty. " I will take the first oath," replied this interesting wo-

man, "but the second I cannot, for those feelings are not in my heart," and the vile wretches, who were incapable of appreciating the Christian heroism of this reply, gave the signal for the murder of the innocent woman; the furious mob, not satisfied with this, tore her body to pieces, and placing her head, her heart, and her lacerated limbs on their pikes, they cried out that they must "carry them to the foot of the throne," and rushed with them to the Temple, where the royal family counted the hours that rolled over their heads in indescribable misery, and agonizing uncertainty. Attracted by the noise in the street, the queen was hastening to the window, when she was held back by some of the guards, one of whom, however, had the cruelty to tell her what was passing in the street. The unhappy princess fell senseless into the arms of the king and the princess Elizabeth, who watched her in speechless agony, while the multitude without continued their fierce shouts.

The shuddering friend of humanity asks where were the authorities, while these atrocious scenes were going on, and whether, among five hundred thousand inhabitants of Paris, there were not a sufficient number of feeling beings to put down five or six hundred assassins? History must leave the answer to philosophy.

When the prisons were emptied, the commune acknowledged its part in the deed, by paying the executioners; and seven of its members, forming the committee of surveillance, sent the following circular to all the communes of France:—"Having learned that barbarous hordes were marching against Paris, the commune of Paris hastens to inform its brothers in all the departments, that a portion of the fierce conspirators, who were detained in the prisons, have been put to death by

the people, an act of justice which seemed to be indispensable, in order to strike terror into the legions of traitors who were within the walls, at the moment when the citizens were to march against the enemy; and certainly the entire nation will not hesitate, after the series of betrayals which have conducted it to the brink of a precipice, to adopt this useful and necessary measure, and all Frenchmen will say to themselves as did the Parisians,—We are to march against the enemy, and we will not leave behind us brigands who may murder our wives and our children.”\* But as yet the atrocity of Paris was not equalled by the rest of France; and four towns only, Meaux, Rheims, Lyons, and Orleans, followed the horrible advice. At Versailles, the municipal authorities did in vain every thing in their power to save a transport of prisoners escorted by five hundred Marseillais volunteers, who passed through their town on their way to Paris, and were there massacred by the escort. Among the victims who thus perished were the Duke of Brissac and the ex-minister Delessart.

Not content with the little effect produced by its circular, the commune of Paris, which may now be considered as the governing body in France, sent commissaries throughout the country, to exhort the people to follow its example; it ruled the elections for the convention which were now going on, while it favored every kind of illegality, and gave itself up to the most frightful excesses. The public funds were robbed, the Garde Meuble, containing the regalia and many other treasures, was pillaged, and national property devastated; and the patriotic members of the commune paid themselves, at the expense of the people, for the crimes they had committed in its name. This most hideous

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\* The members who signed this circular were Duplain, Panis, Sergent Leafont, Marat, Dufort, Jourdeuil.

democracy disposed of the life and property of the citizens. The prisons were filled with those that were suspected. Common robbers were allowed free scope ; and some were seen in the public walks, snatching their trinkets from the women, in order, they said, to lay them on the altar of the fatherland.\* Every legal power was disorganized, and the most fearful anarchy reigned unrestrained.

The Girondins, despairing and disgusted at what they saw going on around them, endeavored in vain to stop the excesses of "these brigands, decked with the municipal scarf." "The Parisians," said Vergniaud, who denominated the massacre in the prisons "a butchering of human flesh,"—"the Parisians are no longer the slaves of crowned tyrants, but of the vilest of men, of the most detestable of villains. It is time to break these shameful fetters, to crush this new tyranny. . . . May the memory of the National Assembly perish, if it leaves unpunished a crime which will place an ineffaceable blot upon the name of the French ; if its rigorous measures do not prove to the nations of Europe that, in spite of the calumnies with which they seek to debase France, there is yet, and even in the midst of the momentary anarchy into which some brigands have plunged us, that there is still in our country some virtue left, and that humanity has not ceased to be honored there !" But the eloquence which had contributed to raise the devastating hurricane that was sweeping over France, was powerless to lay it, and every measure of the assembly to restore order only added to the confusion and the anarchy, and raised such hatred against its members, that their lives were no longer in safety. Again an election, which took place under the most dreadful and the mo-

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\* Lavallée. Thiers, Mignet, &c.

demoralizing circumstances, was looked to with hope, and the convention was sighed for, as if it were to open a new era for France.

After the taking of Verdun, the Duke of Brunswick, who did not approve of the plan of invasion, instead of pressing forward and marching upon Paris, as might easily have been done, extended his forces along the Meuse, losing by this movement a whole week; Dumouriez, on the other side, immediately upon learning the fall of Longwy, had abandoned for the time his design of invading Belgium, and had hastened to Sedan, where he found the division of the army, which had been under Lafayette, discouraged at the loss of their commander, and highly dissatisfied with his successor. The council of war which was called, advised a retreat beyond the Marne, there, in conjunction with the armies of the north and the east, to await farther reinforcements. But Dumouriez, having examined the country around, conceived a plan of profiting by the stupid delay of the Prussians. By a most able manœuvre, he put himself in possession of the defiles of Argonne, which he called the Thermopylæ of France, and farther took such prompt and energetic measures, that within a few days his troops occupied and guarded all the outlets of these defiles, which opened or closed the passage into the interior of France. He thus effectually prevented the progress of the Prussian army towards the capital, and saved it from the menacing danger; while new bands of volunteers daily joined the army, which was now full of courage and confidence in its leaders.

In the mean while, the Prussians, seeing the fault they had committed, attacked the defiles (10th September, 1792,) and were repulsed; but Dumouriez, deceived by the movements of the enemy, lost the advantages which

he had so recently obtained, and saw himself placed in a most perilous position, between twenty-five thousand Austrians, ready to attack him in the flank, while forty thousand Prussians were opposed to his front, and he was encompassed by two rivers, which confined his movements. But ever ready in resources, and as quick in action as the enemy was slow, Dumouriez, nothing daunted, though obliged again to leave the route to the capital open to the enemy, took up his station on the road to Chalons, his right flank being covered by the Aisne, and the left by some ponds; and being protected in the rear by the town of St. Menehould and a corps under Dillon, and thus facing Paris, he awaited the attack of the Prussians, which took place on the 20th September. The engagement began by the Duke of Brunswick directing three columns against Kellermann, who had arrived with reinforcements on the preceding day, and was posted by the mill of Valmy.\*

The battle which ensued, though of very little importance in itself, produced in France all the effects of a great victory. The whole nation, as well as the army, was inspired with new ardor by this first success. The Prussians, unacquainted with the country, deprived of provisions, and ravaged by sickness, were disheartened and vacillating. The Duke of Brunswick, finding that he could neither advance nor remain where he was, determined to retreat, and this measure was approved of by the king of Prussia, who had already come to a similar determination in consequence of events which were taking place in Poland. That country had been invaded by the Russians in order to concert with Austria to overthrow the constitution of 1791. The king of Prussia, fear-

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\* Among the officers who took part in this affair, was the young Duke of Chartres, eldest son of the Duke of Orleans, and now King of the French.

ing to be duped by the other powers, hastened back to ensure to himself a share in the spoils. Longwy and Verdun were in consequence evacuated, and the Prussians repassed the frontiers on the 1st October, 1792; their march was slow, and but feebly impeded, for Dumouriez was now intent on the conquest of Belgium, and had left the care of pursuing them to Killermann, with whom he had disagreed. It is supposed that he had concluded a secret convention of evacuation with the enemy, which was ratified by the executive and the commissaries of the National Assembly who attended the army.\*

In other directions the French arms were as successful. Custine, who commanded the left wing of the army of Alsace, had commenced an offensive war, and on the 21st October took possession of Worms and Spire, and soon after of Mayence, and then directing his movements towards Frankfort, took possession of that city, and continued to advance along the Maine. At the same time hostilities had commenced at the two extreme points of the allies' line of operations in the Low Countries and on the Alps. The Austrians, after having defeated the French near Maulde, (24th September, 1792,) had taken up their position before Lille; instead of regularly besieging the town, they had bombarded it, but without success, for the inhabitants had defended themselves heroically; and upon learning the advance of Dumouriez, the Austrians were obliged to repass the frontiers on the 8th October. On the Alps, Montesquiou had invaded Savoy (23d September) with twenty thousand men, and at the same time Anselme had entered the county of Nice, and taken possession of several towns, one hundred cannons, an immense quantity of ammunition, and several ships of war.

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\* Hardenberg's *Memoires*.

Europe was stupified on finding that the armies of the revolutionists were as dangerous as their doctrines ; and while the people in many cases showed but too great a tendency towards the adoption of the misconceived ideas of liberty disseminated by the French, their monarchs were planning new measures against the nation who was exhibiting so dangerous a precedent.

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## CHAPTER V

First sitting of the National Convention—How composed—The Gironde—The Mountain—The Plain—Animosity of Parties—Royalty abolished—Sufferings of the Royal Family—Their life in the Temple—Proceedings of the Assembly—Accusations of each Party against the other—Debates on the Trial of the King—Calumnies against him—Dissatisfaction against Dumouriez—General Distress—Increasing Animosity of Parties—The King's Trial—Malesherbes' noble conduct—Execution of the King.

THE day after the battle of Valmy the National Convention met. The Girondins, who, notwithstanding the abhorrence in which they were held by the Jacobins, still possessed great influence in the departments, had been returned in great numbers, since no decree, as on a former occasion, precluded the members of the foregoing assembly from making a part of the new one. They now, in their turn, became the moderators and conservatives, and formed the party of the right, while the members of the Mountain now occupied the former place of the Girondins on the left, but still retained the name obtained by their former position, and with it all the passions of which they had before given such strong evidence. Robespierre, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, already well known ; Fabre d'Eglantine, a comic author who had taken an active part in all the revolutionary



scenes; Collet d'Herbois, an actor; David, a painter; and Philip Egalité, formerly Duke of Orleans, were added to the number of the Mountain party, as well as Legendre, the butcher, Parris Sergent, and Billaud Varennes, infamous for their conduct in the commune. These were the elected of that odious faction who had governed Paris since the 19th of August, which, in adding to its list the maniac Marat, before whose bloody doctrines even the executioners of the 3d of September recoiled, gave but too fearful a promise of the reign of terror which was to ensue when this party had annihilated its opponents. Between these two parties of the right and the left was again placed a third, the Plain, or the Marais, as usual composed of men partaking of the opinions of both, and giving the majority to the one or the other, according to their convictions; but who, being vacillating and weak, ended by being entirely overpowered by the most energetic party, and swelling its numbers, became instrumental in sanctioning every excess.

The Gironde and the Mountain stood opposed to each other as two hostile camps. The former consisted of men of some position and substance, many of whom possessed brilliant, if not solid talents, and all of whom had been brought back to sounder and more moderate views, since they had witnessed the scenes of anarchy and bloodshed which had so lately disgraced the capital. But among these brilliant orators, there was not one who had the capacity, even if he had had the ambition, to curb a nation who had broken all bonds, and to seize upon that despotic power, which alone could now put a stop to the prevailing anarchy. Full of confidence, however, in their own power, they believed that they should carry the centre of the assembly

with them in all their measures; the executive was in the hands of their party, and the authorities of the departments were devoted to them; by this support, and through these means, they felt sure they should be able to arrest the progress of disorder, and to establish a republic in which the middle classes, to which they belonged, should have all the power. Their adversaries had other views, and made up for their ignorance by their audacity, their obstinacy, and their maxim, that "during a revolution there are no crimes." It is said that their aim was to save the Revolution from the dangers which threatened it from without, and to push things so far that they could not possibly return to their former state. However, it is difficult to believe that these men had any decided aim, though it cannot be doubted that they were anxious to ensure impunity to themselves. The intentions they professed of devising laws which, by rescuing the poor from their misery, and divesting the rich of their superfluities, should bring about a real equality, of course secured to them all the sympathies of that blind and suffering multitude which is ever prone to think that changes will bring benefits.

The animosity between the two parties was manifested immediately upon the opening of the convention. Pétion, who, together with many other members of the constituent assembly, belonged to the Gironde party, was nominated president; and Manuel, another Girondin, on the very first day of the session, made a proposal, (which was certainly very extraordinary at the moment,) which drew down upon his party new attacks against that ambition of domineering of which their adversaries had long accused them. "Citizens, representatives," said Manuel, "every thing in this assembly

should bear a character of dignity and grandeur, in order that it may be imposing in the sight of the whole world ; I therefore demand that the president of France be lodged in the Tuileries ; that he be preceded there by National Guards, and all the insignia of the law ; and that citizens rise up in his presence." The Mountainists, particularly Tallier and Chabot, declaimed violently against this imitation of royalty, and declared that the representatives of the people should assimilate themselves to the *sansculottes*, who formed the majority of the nation. Tallier added that the president of the convention should rather be found in a fifth story than in a palace, because the former was more frequently the abode of genius and virtue. This proposition was followed by many others, which exhibited the sentiments that prevailed in the assembly as to the new constitution, and also manifested the jealous suspicions of each other, which reigned among the members. It was declared that absolute equality should be the basis of the new constitution, that the sovereignty of the people should be decreed, that *hatred* should be sworn against royalty, dictatorships, triumvirates, and every individual authority, and that the penalty of death should be affixed to the offence of proposing the establishment of any such authorities. These were followed by the formal declaration of the president, by the unanimous consent of the convention, that royalty was abolished in France. Though this was but the declaration of a fact which had existed ever since the 10th of August, it was received with great applause, and messengers were dispatched to announce the joyful intelligence to the armies, and all the municipalities of France.

In the mean while the unhappy prisoners in the Temple, who sanctified their captivity by the Christian

resignation and sincere piety with which they bore it, were still rigorously guarded by the commissioners of the commune, whose brutality towards them has been denounced even by the Jacobins themselves. The municipal officers who guarded them had orders never to lose sight of them, and these orders were in many cases so strictly followed as to give additional torture to their victims. At night, when the members of the royal family had retired to their humble bed-rooms, a bed, wherein slept an officer of the guard, was placed outside of each door, in order to preclude the possibility of escape. At first the prisoners had been allowed the use of pen, ink, and paper, but they were soon deprived of these ; and also of all sharp instruments, such as razors, knives, penknives, and scissors, for which search was made with a revolting and insulting minuteness. By these means the princesses, who had hitherto kept their own and the king's clothes in repair, were debarred even the decency of wearing whole clothes, for they had had no new apparel since they had been removed to the Temple, and they had not previously had time to make any provision ; and the Queen of France was beholden to the wife of the English ambassador for linen ! It is supposed that the commune would not have denied the necessaries of life to the royal family, if any request had been made ; but the pride which revolted from this condescension is neither unnatural nor blameable. Some historians do indeed mention official accounts of the expenses of the Temple, which prove that the royal kitchen was well supplied ; and these documents cannot be doubted, as they always speak with due respect of the royal prisoners, and at the same time bear witness to the sobriety of Louis XVI., whose base detractors had spread the report that he allowed himself too great an

indulgence in wine ; and, if fabricated by them, these accounts would have borne the same infamous character.

The only attendant who had been allowed to follow the royal family to prison was Cléry, the king's faithful *valet de chambre*, who, with a devotion that does equal honor to his own heart, and to the kindness of his royal master and family, sought by redoubled zeal and activity to make them forget that he was their only attendant. In the kitchen, however, there were thirteen domestics employed ; but with the exception of one, who sometimes assisted Cléry in waiting at table, none of these were allowed to enter the apartments of the prisoners. Through this one, who had a humane heart, Cléry obtained the only intelligence which reached them of what was passing without, until he had devised the ingenious plan of gaining information through means of a newsman, who placed himself under the windows of the Temple, and, under pretence of offering his papers for sale, in a loud voice proclaimed their contents.

Louis, being now reduced to private life, developed all those amiable qualities which would have sufficed to make him beloved and respected, had his lot been cast in the humbler walks of life ; while the more exalted characters of the queen and the Princess Elizabeth bore equally well the test of adversity. The greater part of the day was occupied with the education of the young prince and princess, who shared their parents' captivity ; and the only diversion which broke the monotony of their life, was a short walk in the gardens of the Temple accompanied by a strong guard, a pleasure which was but too often bought at the expense of bitter humiliations heaped upon them by their unmerciful jailers, or by the heartless mob. Occasionally, however, they enjoyed the melancholy satisfaction of catching the anxious and

sympathizing glance of some of their former dependants, who had, alas! nothing else to give, for they were as sorely beset as their royal benefactors.

The royal family were made acquainted with the proceedings in the convention, on the 21st, by the stentorian voice of the municipal officer, proclaiming (outside of their prison windows) the abolition of royalty, and the establishment of the republic. The king and the queen both heard the announcement with unshaken firmness, greatly to the disappointment of their ferocious jailer,\* Hébert, who had fixed his eyes upon them with a malicious grin, anticipating the delight of reveling in the sight of their misery. The populace assembled without, prompted by the same uncharitable feelings, and mistaking Cléry, who had drawn near the window, for his royal master, overwhelmed him with abuse; and the military who escorted the municipal officer threatened him with their sabres.

On the 22d of September, the convention decreed that all the laws which were not abrogated should be considered in full force; that all the administrative, municipal, and judiciary bodies should be re-elected; that the emigrants should be considered banished for life, and should be punished with death in case they re-entered France, or were taken in arms. The assembly then divided into committees of surveillance, of war, of legislation, of finance, of diplomacy, &c., all of which were mostly composed of Girondins. This section of the assembly then demanded from the ministers a report of the state of affairs: and when Roland had unveiled all the atrocities of the massacres of September, and had denounced the anarchy which was now spreading in the departments, several of the Girondins

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\* The members of the commune exercised this function by turns.

seized this opportunity for attacking the Jacobins, who, they said, were the instigators of these crimes, and were desirous of arriving at supreme power through bloodshed and anarchy. They ended by denouncing Danton, Robespierre, and Marat, as the triumvirate, who were endeavoring to obtain the dictatorship. The Jacobins replied by counter accusations against the Girondins, who, they said, wished to divide the empire, to sacrifice the capital, and render France a federation of small states. "Therefore," said Danton, "they are indignant at the energetic measures which we take for the public good. They are desirous of exercising in the disunited departments that dictatorship which they now accuse us of coveting, and they would destroy the republic by federalism." Robespierre limited his defence to the usual and oft-repeated enumeration of his services; but Marat, with that shameless audacity that characterized all his proceedings, boldly proclaimed his bloody principles, and made even the Mountainists shudder at the monster, "dripping with gall and blood," as Vergniaud had expressed it, whom they had associated with themselves. The Girondins are generally blamed for the imprudence of their attacks upon their adversaries; but to the friend of humanity, who believes that things had then arrived at that point in France, that they were beyond all human control, it is consolatory to see in the very imprudence of these attacks, proofs that there were still human hearts in France, and that the men who, by their impetuous passions and ignorant zeal, had greatly contributed to bring about the dreadful state of disorder which they now deprecated, had learned to see whither they had been carried. One great evil did, however, certainly result from their loudly expressed animosity to

Robespierre, and that was the giving him greater importance in the eyes of his party and the multitude than he would otherwise have obtained, and which contributed materially to his acquiring the power which he afterwards exercised. In the more important points of government, the Girondins also committed gross errors. Though aiming at directing affairs, they took no measures to secure power to themselves; all their propositions were generally rejected; and not only were they unable to put into execution their favorite idea of having a departmental guard of three thousand men to ensure the independence of the convention, but the proposal of such a measure furnished their adversaries with new weapons against them; their resolution was met by the Mountain with another; the declaration of the *unity and indivisibility of the republic*, which was carried, though it contained implied accusations against their adversaries, whom, as we have already seen, they suspected, or pretended to suspect, of wishing to divide the empire. At length an apparent truce suspended the wearisome quarrels between the two parties, which only served to prove that in that France, which wished to be considered as glowing with the enthusiasm of liberty, none could agree upon what liberty was, while all felt that fear of despotism which anarchy must ever bring in its wake. The attention of the assembly was for a moment turned to the new constitution which was again to be given to France; but the Mountainist party, finding that the constitutional committee was to be directed by their adversaries, in order to make a diversion in their own favor, proposed the trial of the king, which they knew would be the powerful means of again working up the passions of the people, and of preventing the establishment of any other kind of government than that



of the mob, which they directed. They also knew that the Girondins would be averse to the condemnation of the king; and they looked with double delight to the trial, as it would not alone satisfy their hatred against royalty, but would also be a new means of rendering their enemies unpopular, and of hastening their downfall. These men were never mistaken, when they calculated upon the passions they knew so well how to excite.

The Jacobin club, which had long re-echoed to invectives against the king, and daily spread new calumnies against his character, had prepared the public mind for his condemnation, by causing it to be considered as necessary for liberty. The affiliated clubs in the departments had also done their best, and the result was that deputations presented themselves at the bar of the convention, demanding vengeance on Louis *Capet*; the dignity of these new republicans would not allow them to bestow any other title on their former monarch. Their demands were acceded to, and the debates on the king's trial commenced at a most propitious moment for those who hoped for a bloody issue. The general animosity against the king was at that time greatly increased by the discovery of a secret closet in the palace of the Tuileries, wherein the king had deposited all the papers relative to the correspondence which had passed between him and the emigrants, the foreign powers, Mirabeau, and the different members of the constituent assembly who had entered into negotiations with the court. The perverted imagination of the mob was now again set to work, to invent new calumnies against the unhappy monarch; and the locksmith who had contrived the closet for the king, and who was under the greatest personal obligations to him for benefits received, was base enough to pander to the public appetite, and to ac-

cuse the king of having attempted to poison him, in order to ensure his secrecy. He was of course believed; and the vengeance taken upon the bust of Mirabeau, which had been placed in the hall of the Jacobins, and was now smashed to pieces, was ominous of the fate that awaited the living Louis.

For some time the assembly entertained doubts whether the prince, being once dethroned, could be further prosecuted, as there was no tribunal that could pronounce judgment upon him, and no kind of punishment that could be inflicted; unfortunately, however, the factions were not only strong enough to break the law, but they had also the power to give to their infractions of it an appearance of legality; accordingly, by dint of false interpretations, the committee of legislation, charged with a report upon the subject, soon pronounced that Louis XVI. could be tried, and that by the convention itself.

The discussions commenced on the 13th of November. In vain did the moderate party maintain the inviolability guarantied to the king by the constitution, and though admitting that he was guilty, seek to prove by the laws of humanity as well as by the laws of the state, that he ought not and could not be condemned to death, and that the convention had no right to erect itself into a tribunal. The Mountainists, on their side, denied the inviolability, but nevertheless rejected the trial, though upon very different grounds. "Citizens," said St. Just, "I undertake to prove that the opinion of Morisson, who believes in the inviolability of the king, and that of the committee, who require him to be judged as a citizen, are equally wrong. I maintain that the king should be judged as an enemy; that our business is not so much to try him, as to oppose him:

that considered as nothing in the contract which unites Frenchmen, the forms of procedure are not in the civil law, but in the law of nations ; that delays and consideration are in this case a real imprudence ; and that, after the fault of retarding the movement for giving new laws, the most fatal would be that which should lead us to temporize with the king." Then, referring the whole question to considerations of enmity and policy, he added : " The same men who are about to judge Louis, have a republic to form ; those who attach any importance to the just chastisement of a king, will never found a republic. . . . Citizens, if the Roman people, after six hundred years of virtuous hatred to kings ; if Great Britain, after the death of Cromwell, saw kings revive, notwithstanding the energy of its people, what ought not to be feared among us by all good citizens and friends of liberty, at seeing the axe tremble in your hands, and a people forced, in the very first day of its freedom, to respect the remembrance of its chains !"

To all the sophisms and the passions of the Mountainists, the Girondins in vain opposed the more humane feelings that animated them : in these discussions, as in all their movements, they were weak and vacillating, while their opponents were impetuous and determined ; and the Plain having been subdued by the most energetic party, it was resolved that the king should be brought before the convention to stand his trial.

While the fanatical republicans were preparing to take the life of an innocent and helpless man, whose chief crime in their eyes was his having been born to command those who now considered it degradation to submit to any kind of authority ; the greatest disorders were introduced in every branch of administration by these lovers of anarchy, masked under the name of lib-

erty, and were productive of burdens and sufferings, which were quite equal to any under which the people had ever bent during the reign of the most despotic and most unscrupulous of their monarchs.

Dumouriez, who had reassumed his plan of conquering Belgium, had opened the campaign with the brilliant victory of Jemappes. The hostilities were, however, directed solely against the Austrians, whose yoke had become hateful to the Belgians, and the French general presented himself to this people as a liberator, not as a conqueror, merely suggesting the same revolutionary measures to them, as had been taken by the French. But, in order to be consistent, it was necessary for him to avoid violently levying contributions in the invaded land, and his army was in a state of the utmost destitution, while the Belgians were nowise inclined to barter their goods for worthless *assignats*. Dumouriez, to help himself out of this difficulty, conceived the plan of procuring a loan from the Belgian clergy, to be guaranteed by France, and then himself to provide all the necessaries for the army. He further calculated, that as Belgium would have to pay France an indemnity for undertaking its *liberation*, this indemnity might be exchanged against the debt incurred, and that, by means of the purchases he had to make, the circulation of French assignats would be gradually introduced. The Belgian clergy, seeing a guarantee for their own security in this desire of the French general of entering into negotiations for a loan, acceded to his wish, and he was enabled to provide for some of the most pressing wants of his troops. But his rapid success did not reconcile the Jacobins to his arbitrary measures and presumptuous tone, and they were further exasperated against him, because he did not seem inclined to force Jaco-

binism upon the Belgians, who, though desirous of throwing off the yoke of the foreigners, were far from being inspired by the fanatic ideas of the French. These events, together with others in the interior, brought about a total revolution in the administrative departments, which had hitherto remained untouched, because they did not hold out so great temptations to the ambitious. Seeing how much they would have it in their power to control the armies through the war-office, this office was now invaded by the Jacobins, and the minister of war, (Pache,) a weak and pliant man, who had succeeded Servan, was held in perfect subjection by them. A committee of purchasers (*comité d'achats*) was nominated to provide for the armies, to avoid the frauds practised by the contractors; and Dumouriez was ordered to desist for the future from entering into any negotiations for provisioning his army. The general was indignant, and protested loudly against the *comité d'achats*, which he maintained was an absurdity, and declared that the army would perish for want, ere the said committee could find means to export and transport the necessary provisions; and he offered his resignation, in case his complaints were not attended to. All parties in France thundered against the general, who was suspected of dangerous ambition, and was denominated Cæsar Dumouriez; while he continued to act as before, and with the troops, who were by this means saved from starvation, occupied almost the whole of Belgium. He had, however, a thousand difficulties to contend with; the enthusiasm which had made his compatriots flock to his banners, while the enemy was threatening their country, began now to abate, and desertions from the army became very frequent.

In the mean time, the people who had remained at

home were not better off than the army ; here also starvation and destitution of every kind were pressing upon the multitude. The harvest had been retarded for want of hands, as well as the thrashing out of the corn ; also the insecurity of the times, the fear of being pillaged on the way, and the thousand vexations which awaited them at the markets, deterred the farmers from bringing their provisions thither ; besides, they were unwilling to part with their goods for bad assignats. The people, instead of being taught a lesson by the difficulties their own disorders occasioned, only broke out into new violence against the farmers, and made them still more reluctant to appear in the markets ; and the scarcity became worse in consequence. To increase the evil, everybody rendered provident by the danger of starvation, which they foresaw, public authorities, as well as private individuals, hastened to lay in stores for a future day. The commune of Paris added to the existing difficulties by buying up corn in the neighboring departments, and selling it under price in the capital, in order to obtain popularity ; from which resulted, that the merchants withdrew from the market, as they could not compete with these prices, and the country people, attracted by the cheapness of provisions, flocked to town, and absorbed a great part of what had been provided for the subsistence of the capital.

All parties were of course greatly moved by this state of things, and strongly evinced their different characters by the measures proposed for obviating the difficulties. The Jacobins, the men who had offered up torrents of blood—to which they were now going to add that of a monarch—on the altar of what they called liberty, immediately proposed measures of extreme violence and coercion. They would have the farmers forced to car-

ry their grain to market, to sell it at a price fixed by the communes, which should also be watchful that the corn did not again leave the place, and was not accumulated in the granaries of what they called the monopolists, (*accapareurs*.) They were desirous of establishing a system of commerce based upon the fear of tortures and death. The more moderate party, on the contrary, was anxious to put a stop to that anarchy which was the first cause of the stagnation of commerce and of the existing scarcity, and by letting things take their natural course, they were sure all would soon be again righted. But while these subjects were being discussed in the convention, and were of course giving the parties new occasion for mutual attacks and accusations, the people in the provinces, and particularly those of the department of the Eure and Loire, revolted and accused the convention of being the cause of all their sufferings, because it would not put a fixed price upon corn; and at the same time charged it with wishing to destroy religion. The latter complaint was occasioned by a measure which had been proposed by Cambonne, to suppress all the expenses for religious purposes, in order to provide for the wants of the army, and to make all those "who wished to hear mass pay for it."

As the difficulties increased, so increased the mutual hatred of the two parties in the convention. On the 30th, after a most stormy debate, wherein Marat, according to his usual fashion, had denounced conspiracies and intrigues, which most frequently existed in his own imagination alone, Robespierre mounted the tribune, and proposed, as the best means of at once putting down all conspiracies, "to condemn to-morrow the tyrant of the French to the punishment he has deserved by his crimes." The Girondins opposed, and after many long and sterile

debates they at last prevailed, as we have seen, in obtaining a trial for the king, though they must have felt that the Mountainists, who were backed by the immense multitude without, which participated in all their passions, were predetermined upon the result of the trial.

On the 11th of January, 1793, Louis XVI. was summoned before the convention. Fortunately, Cléry had previously obtained information of the king's intended trial, and separation from his family during that period. Fearing the effect that it might produce upon the king, he first acquainted the Princess Elizabeth with it, and upon her devolved the painful task of communicating the melancholy intelligence to her unhappy brother. The king heard it with perfect resignation, and prepared to bear every thing that should meet him with the firmness of a Christian. The rolling of drums, the march of troops, the assembling of all the administrative bodies, and the placing of double guards before every public place of importance, announced to the capital that for the first time it was to see the monarch appear before the people to answer for the crimes it imputed to him. The royal family were at breakfast when the officers appeared to conduct the king to the convention, and the presence of these strange witnesses, as well as the necessity of appearing ignorant of what was going on, prevented the unhappy family from giving vent to their feelings at this most trying moment of their lives. The king went in a carriage, accompanied by the mayor, and surrounded by an immense guard; but this was needless; the number of those who panted for the unhappy monarch's blood was too great, in comparison to those who felt for his fate, to admit of any attempt to save him. He entered the assembly with a firm and manly bearing, and standing before the bar, looked round him with an air of



resolution. In a faltering tone, the president addressed to him the following words: "Louis, the French nation accuses you: you are now about to hear the reading of the charges. Louis, sit down." The king complied, and then in a firm and calm, and sometimes in a touching manner, replied to the accusations brought against him. Some of the facts he denied, for others he made his ministers responsible; but when at last the outrageous falsehood was uttered that he had shed the blood of the people on the 10th of August, even his mild spirit was roused, and with the greatest indignation he exclaimed: "No, sir; no, it was not I that did that! . . ." But among the facts that Louis denied, were also some the truth of which was incontestably proved, such as the existence of the iron closet; and here again we have to deplore that weakness of mind that neutralized the virtues of this otherwise good man.

After the interrogatory was ended, the king demanded to have a copy of the bill of accusation, and counsel to aid him in his defence. He was then reconducted to the Temple, and his first question on arriving was for his family. He then received the stunning intelligence that he was indeed to be separated from them during the time of his trial. But the unhappy monarch, who had had so many proofs of the hard-heartedness of those who, having been his accusers, were now to be his judges, could not believe that they were so lost to all feeling, as to persist in the resolution of separating a dying father and husband from those he was to leave in a state of misery to which few on earth have been reduced; and he continued to implore, until at length his prayer was granted. On the 15th he was again allowed to see his family.

After Louis had left the assembly, violent discussions

ensued, as to whether he was to be allowed counsel or not. The more just opinion this time prevailed; and Target, whom the king had chosen, together with Tronchet, for his defender, having declined the duty, the venerable Malesherbes, the friend of Turgot, offered to take his place. "I have been twice called (wrote this virtuous man, whose name shines like a bright star in the dark history of those fearful times) to be counsel to him who was once my master, at a time when these functions were ambitiously sought by every one; I owe him the same service now, when they are by many considered dangerous." The poor abandoned king was deeply touched on hearing of this proof of devotion, and when Malesherbes was introduced to him, he threw himself in his arms, saying: "The sacrifice you make for me is so much the more generous, as you expose your own life without a chance of saving mine." Though all must have been of the same opinion, Malesherbes and Tronchet, having associated with themselves Desèze, seriously occupied themselves with the king's defence, without, however, inspiring the devoted victim with any false hopes. "They will take my life, of that I am sure," said Louis: "but no matter; let us busy ourselves with our process, as if I were sure of gaining it. Indeed I *shall* gain it; for the memory I leave behind will be spotless."

On the 26th the defence was completed, and Louis again appeared before the convention, with the same calmness and resignation as before. Desèze pronounced the able and eloquent defence, concluding with the words: "Listen first to what Fame will say to History. Louis, who ascended the throne at the age of twenty, carried with him there an example of morals, of justice, and of economy: he had no weaknesses, no corrupting

passions, and he was the constant friend of the people. The people desired that a disastrous impost should be abolished, and Louis abolished it; the people asked for the abolition of servitudes, and Louis destroyed them; they demanded reforms, he consented to them; they wished to change the laws by which they were governed, he agreed to their demands; the people required that some millions of people should recover their rights, and these he rendered to them; the people asked for liberty, and he gave it to them. No one can dispute that Louis had the glory of preventing the demands of his people by making these sacrifices, and he it is whom it has been proposed to . . . . Citizens, I cannot go on; I pause before History: remember that History will judge your judgment, and that hers will be that of ages to come." The passions of the men he appealed to, however, were too strong to allow of their looking any farther than to the gratification of the moment, and though fame was the only eternity they hoped for, it was indifferent to them at that moment.

No sooner had Louis left the convention, than a scene of riot and disorder took place, which surpassed every thing that had as yet been seen even in that most disorderly assembly. Lanjuinais, a Girondin, gave the signal, by demanding the rescission of the procedure. "You cannot," said he to the assembly, "be at once accusers, judges, and jury, particularly as you have all openly declared your opinions, and some of you with most scandalous ferocity." These words produced the greatest tumult, which was very near ending in a regular outbreak. Louvet and Barbaroux several times descended to the bar, with about a hundred more Girondins, and tried to scale the seats of the Mountainists. From all sides were heard the terms scoundrels, robbers,

traitors, conspirators, which these worthy patriots applied to each other. Marat's disgusting person, and just as disgusting eloquence, was the most revolting feature in this shameful conflict, in which the people in the galleries also took a part, whenever the members of the Mountain pointed out to them an adversary to attack. At last some kind of order was restored, and it was decreed that the king's process should be continued, to the exclusion of all other business. The Mountain, irritated at this farther delay, recommenced its demands for the immediate execution of the king, which it represented as being necessary for the salvation of the people, and as the only means of breaking entirely with the past. So lost to shame was this faction, that one of its members, Merlin de Thionville, dared to say—"If I had followed my first thought on the 10th August, I would have spared you the trouble of judging the tyrant." The unhappy king's name was never mentioned without being accompanied by terms of abuse, which became even ridiculous in their exaggeration; and to all this was added base flatteries to the mob, and declamatory allusions to characters of antiquity, who would have blushed at this profanation of their names. As the discussion continued, the personal feelings against the king seemed less to prevail, and his death was then merely considered in its influence on the Revolution. The Girondins were alarmed at the turn that matters were taking. They had wished to save the king's life, because they regarded his death as a useless cruelty, which would cover the Revolution with opprobrium, and would be looked upon as a challenge offered to the whole of Europe; but seeing that they would be lost if they absolved him, and being unwilling to contribute to the triumph of their enemies, by condemning him, they, in

their profound incapacity, proposed a measure which was exactly calculated to bring about that which they feared. They demanded that appeal should be made to the people on the judgment of the king. This proposal, which furnished their adversaries with the most plausible reason for accusing them of a desire of plunging France into a civil war, has, on the other side, given rise to suspicions as to the sincerity of their desire to save the king; and they have been accused of having, on the contrary, wished by these means to implicate the whole people in his death, so as to render it impossible for them to draw back. The onward career of the Revolution was, however, clearly the wish of the Jacobins, and it seems, therefore, unjust to attribute such traitorous designs to men, who appear rather to have sinned from ignorance and incapacity than from evil intentions.

The discussion lasted twelve days, and was but a continuation of the struggle between the two parties, during which they passed decrees, not with a view to public interest, but with a desire to curb each other. Thus the Girondins proposed and carried a measure, determining that whoever should attempt or propose to re-establish royalty should be punished with death; and the Mountainists, in their turn, obtained a decree, that whoever should attempt or propose to dis sever the unity of the republic should be similarly punished. The Girondins then obtained a decree, ordering the banishment of the Orleans family, suspected of designs upon the throne; and the Mountainists succeeded in having the execution of the decree deferred until judgment should be pronounced upon the king. During this time Paris was in a state of extreme agitation. The most violent among the Jacobins invaded the sections, and drove the honest and peaceful men from every council; the National

Guard was dispirited and remained passive ; the great council of the commune, though it had been renewed since the horrid massacres of September, was nevertheless still composed of a vile set, under the direction of Hébert and Chaumette ; and to all the other causes of agitation was added the misery occasioned by the scarcity, to which allusion has already been made.

At length it was finally determined in the convention, that three questions were to be put relative to the king's trial, and that every member should in his turn ascend the tribune, to pronounce his vote, which was to be written and signed. The questions were, Is Louis guilty of conspiracy against the nation, and of assaults upon the general safety of the state ? Shall the judgment be submitted to the sanction of the people ? What shall be the punishment ?

The Mountainists voted with evident joy and alacrity ; they had no scruples on the subject : to imbrue their hands in blood had become to them an easy and familiar task. The Girondins had still a conscience, but it did not speak loud enough to save them from guilt. The votes being given, the president declared, *in the name of the convention, that the punishment it awards Louis Capet is death.*

The sentence was immediately communicated to the unhappy king, who wrote in reply to the assembly, "I owe it to my honor, I owe it to my family, not to submit to a judgment which accuses me of a crime, that I have never committed. I declare in consequence that I appeal to the people against the judgment of its representatives." On the motion of Robespierre, this appeal was rejected, and on the morrow it was decreed that the ministers should have the judgment executed within four-and-twenty hours, and that the commune should al-

low the king free communication with his family, and free choice of an ecclesiastic to attend him.

The Christian fortitude which Louis had shown throughout his sufferings, did not forsake him in his last trial. The Abbé Edgworth, the worthy ecclesiastic whom he chose to attend him in his last moments, describes as follows his interview with the king:—"The moment I saw the king, a prince once so elevated by fortune, and now so fallen, I was no longer master of myself; tears rolled down my cheeks, and I sank at his feet, unable to express myself in any other language than that of my affliction. The sight of me thus prostrate before him affected him more, far more, than the decree of the convention, the sentence of death which had just been read to him. Tears flowed in like manner down the countenance of the king. Recovering himself at length,—'Pardon,' he cried, 'pardon this weakness, if weakness it must be called, whatever be the occasion; but I have lived so long in the midst of my enemies, that the sight of a faithful subject like you, speaks so differently to my heart, that in spite of myself it quite unmans me.'"

After this, the king had to meet and to take the last farewell of his family. The agony of this scene, I pass over in silence. It was such that every feeling heart will pray to God to be spared the inflicting of, even in the justest cause, and to make us shudder at the thought of those who inflicted it wantonly and unjustly. What were the feelings of Louis with regard to these unhappy men, we learn from his will, which contains these words: "I beg all those whom I have offended through inadvertency, (for I do not recollect having ever intentionally offended any one,) and also all those to whom I may have given a bad example, to forgive me for the evil

which such conduct may have produced. I beseech all those who are endowed with charity, to join their prayers with mine, to obtain of God the pardon of my iniquities. I pardon with all my heart those who have become my enemies without cause, and I pray to God to pardon them; as also those who, from mistaken zeal, have done me the greatest injuries."

What were the faults of the king, compared to this virtue in the man!

On the morning of the 21st of January, 1793, Louis was conducted slowly through a whole army, to the *Place de la Révolution*, where a scaffold was erected near the ruins of the statue of Louis XV. Not one word of sympathy was heard along his passage, but ye will hope, for the sake of humanity, that many a silent tear was dropped, that many a silent prayer was offered up for him, and those he left behind him, though terror prevented it from rising from the heart to the lips. On mounting the scaffold, the king attempted to address the multitude, but Santerre, who commanded the troops, gave the signal for the rolling of the drums to drown his voice, and in a few moments the most innocent of monarchs fell the victim of a revolution which his guilty ancestors had bequeathed to him.



## CHAPTER VI.

**General Hostility of Foreign Powers—Active Measures for raising Troops—Plans of Dumouriez—Continued and violent disagreements in the Assembly—Defection of Dumouriez—Growing Weakness of the Girondin Party—Disturbances throughout the Provinces—Civil War in La Vendée—The Country assailed on all sides by Foreign Powers—Mutual Hatred and Distrust of the Parties in the Convention—Fall of the Girondins—Excitement in various Provinces—Disastrous state of Affairs—Sufferings of the People—Assignats—Oppressive and Illegal Measures of the Government—Tyrannical Interference.**

THE French perfectly well understood the position in which they had placed themselves with regard to the rest of Europe by decreeing the king's death, but the greater number accepted it with joy. "We can no more recoil," said Marat; "we must now either conquer or die!" and the army wrote to the assembly: "We thank you for having made it necessary for us to be victorious!" According to the Mountainists, the head of the last of the Capets was the gauntlet thrown to the monarchies of Europe, and was indeed the signal for all the powers of Europe, who had hitherto stood aloof in anxious suspense, to forget all other enmities and interests, and to turn their arms against that nation who, not content with overthrowing the whole social edifice in their own country, called upon all the nations of the earth to do the same, and offered their assistance in the work of destruction. French historians consider the hostile steps of the European powers, and particularly of England, unjust against the French revolution; and so they would have been had the revolutionists been content without seeking allies among their subjects, for no nation has a right to interfere, in a hostile way, in the domestic broils of its neighbor. But, from the very commencement of the revolution, the French had used their opinions as ag-

gressive weapons, and therefore Europe was now in arms against them. The only powers that remained neutral were Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Venice, and Turkey.

France was not alarmed by the enemies she had provoked ; she looked to her resources : “ three millions of men, eight millions of property, and all the nations of Europe to revolutionize,” and she felt secure. The convention for a moment forgot all dissensions in its anxiety to take measures of safety for the country ; the first of which was to replace the incompetent Pache by Beurnonville as minister of war. Cambon, *rapporteur* of the finance committee, having shown that they could not again have recourse to contributions or loans, it was decreed that more assignats should be issued. The assignats already in circulation amounted to the sum of two thousand three hundred and eighty-seven millions, (£95,480,000,) but the confiscated property of the emigrants was valued at seven thousand seven hundred and fifty ; and the assembly first decreed an issue of eight hundred millions of assignats, and three months later of one thousand two hundred millions more ; and farther, when the *rapporteur* of the military committee had stated that the army, reduced to two hundred and sixty thousand men, was far from efficient to guard all the quarters whence attacks might be expected, it was decreed that all the National Guards were in permanent requisition, and that three hundred thousand more should immediately be levied. They were, however, obliged to open the campaign with only two hundred and seventy thousand men. Fifty thousand were drawn together on the coasts, or near the Pyrenees ; forty thousand were stationed on the Alps, eighty thousand on the Rhine, and twenty thousand on the Moselle, besides eighty thousand

on the Rôer and in Belgium. This latter army was, as we have seen, in a state of the utmost destitution, and Dumouriez had, therefore, not ventured to attempt to throw back the enemy beyond the Rhine ; besides, he had been more intent upon the internal disturbances in his own country than upon his military operations. In consequence of the decree of the 15th December, a host of Jacobins had invaded Belgium, under the name of commissaries of the executive government, and had brought with them the anarchy of France with all its engines, such as clubs, assignats, imprisonments, and sequestration of the property of nobles and clergy. The Belgians cursed their liberators ; and their indignation was at its height when they saw even their churches profaned and despoiled. Irritated at all these excesses, Dumouriez repaired to Paris to denounce those who were committing them, but was received by the calumnies of the clubs, which accused him of having allowed the Austrians to escape, as he had let the Prussians withdraw ; and he departed again, determined to perform some striking deed which should give him the right and the power to put down the odious sway of the Jacobins. But the movements he had made in Holland to that effect were attended with very little success, and he ended by being defeated at Aix-la-Chapelle and at Neerwinden. Seeing that the loss of Belgium would be the inevitable result of this defeat, and that he would in consequence be exposed to the fury of his enemies, he resumed the project which he had entertained ever since the commencement of the campaign, and to which he might have attached some hope had he been a conquering instead of a defeated general, but which, under the latter circumstances, led to his ruin, as well as to that of the Girondins, who were suspected of being his accom-

plices. Dumouriez's plan was no less than to bring France back to the constitution of '91, to reconcile her with the powers of Europe by giving her a legal government, and to place upon the throne the Duke of Chartres, the son of Philip Egalité. For this purpose he recalled his troops from Holland, and made his retreat, slowly followed by the Austrians, with whom he had made a secret engagement to evacuate Belgium. He abandoned Brussels, and evacuated Antwerp and Namur, and arrived on the French frontiers, where he cantoned his troops in the camps of Maulde and Bruille.

In the mean while the struggles of the Girondins and the Mountainists, which the king's death had but rendered more fierce, went on. "One would have supposed them to be two distinct assemblies, each laying every day before the republic a bill of accusation against the other. They considered the ruin of their enemies the most sacred duty; every day massacres were announced for the ensuing day, and the threats did not always proceed from the Jacobins: they were also heard against them."\* The Mountainists maintained that the Girondins were going to separate themselves from France, to join England, deliver up Savoy to the Piedmontese, and to open the south of France to the Spaniards, &c. &c. The Girondins, on the other side, said, "When the left side has murdered the right side, the Duke of York will come and take possession of the throne, and Orleans, who has promised it to him, will assassinate him; Orleans will then be assassinated by Marat, Danton, and Robespierre; and the triumvirs will divide among themselves France covered with blood and ashes, until the cleverest of the three (and that will be Danton) assassinates the other two, and reigns alone."†

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\* *Mem. de Garat, Histoire Parlem.*

† *His' Parlem.*

Such were the men of renovated, republican France; such were the leaders who, the unhappy people thought, had taken them out of bondage, and whose worthlessness, after having made France the theatre of scenes the atrocity of which it had never witnessed in the days of the most rigid despotism, was to lead them back to despotism, only under a new form. The indefatigable bravery of the French, in combating their external foes, does indeed prove that there was a true love of their country at the bottom of their hearts, and on this love what noble sentiments may not be ingrafted! The soldiers employed on the frontiers may be said to be the only Frenchmen of those days whose patriotism remained pure.

The Girondins were every day losing ground: their feeble efforts for order and liberty could not counterbalance, far less prevent, the energetic measures of the Mountainists for anarchy and oppression.

On receipt of the news of the defeat of Aix-la-Chapelle, the capital, fermented by the Jacobins, was in a state of agitation almost equal to that which preceded the massacres of September, and again measures of an extra legal nature were proposed, to counteract the enemies in the interior, who served as a pretext for every new act of violence. The Girondins this time carried the victory over their adversaries, by obtaining the passing of a decree that placed the extraordinary tribunal\* which was to be erected for judging conspirators, under the control of the convention; but so great was the tumult which the Mountainists raised in consequence thereof, that a band of Jacobins marched against the assembly, demanding the heads of the

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\* This tribunal was composed of a jury, of five judges, of a public accuser, and of two assistants, all appointed by the convention.

Girondins. Of the latter, some hid themselves ; others, armed, determined that if they fell, some of the Mountainists should die with them. But a battalion of a regiment of the line being fortunately at this critical time in Paris, Beurnonville, minister of war, was able to disperse the rioters.

A few days after, however, when news arrived of the defeat at Neerwinden, which was accompanied by a letter from Dumouriez, full of threats against the convention, all resistance of the Girondins, who were accused of being leagued with him, was in vain ; and the Mountain decreed that all those who took part in counter-revolutionary movements should be outlawed ; that all ecclesiastics on whom banishment had been pronounced, and who should still be found in France, should be put to death ; that domiciliary visits should be made with a view to disarming the suspected ; that the names of the inhabitants of every house should be written on their doors, &c., &c. They further demanded that the executive power should be taken from the ministers to be vested in the convention, and that a committee of public safety (*salut public*) should be appointed, and be invested with the power of exercising a kind of dictatorship. Finally, on learning that Dumouriez had avowed his counter-revolutionary intentions, he was summoned to the bar of the convention, and the minister of war and four deputies were sent to intimate to him this order.

When they arrived, Dumouriez's dispositions were already taken : he had entered into engagements with the Austrians, who were to remain on the frontier, while he marched against Paris, "to re-establish the constitution of '91, and save the sound and oppressed part of the convention." Instead, therefore, of obeying

the summons of the commissaries, he arrested them, and gave them into the custody of the Austrians. Here, however, the success of Dumouriez ended, for he was first defeated by a corps of volunteers, then abandoned by his own troops, and obliged to fly the country. The convention put a price upon his head, and named Dampierre his successor as commander in Belgium.

After the defection of Dumouriez, the Jacobins raised their voices louder than ever against the Girondins and Philip of Orleans. The Girondins retaliated upon the Mountainists, and particularly upon Danton, who had recently been in Belgium, and had enriched himself with the spoils of that country. Danton, highly exasperated, declared war of extermination against them. The convention decreed that its members might, in case of very grave suspicions, be summoned before the revolutionary tribunal; that Philip of Orleans and his family should be arrested, and transferred to Marseilles; that the extraordinary tribunal should be authorized to pass sentence upon crimes of conspiracy on the simple denunciation of the public accuser; that three members of the convention should be in constant attendance on each division of the army, and be invested with unlimited power to watch over the conduct of the generals, to concert operations, to levy national guards, to take all pressing measures for the subsistence of the troops, to call upon all functionaries to lend their assistance, &c., &c. Finally, the committee of public safety was established. It was composed of nine members, who were to be re-elected every month, and whose deliberations were to be secret; they were to watch over, to accelerate, or to suspend, the action of the executive power, according to the exigencies of the time, and were in urgent cases to take measures for external as

well as internal defence, and were to correspond with the commissaries of the convention. The Girondins were excluded from this committee, as well as from all other administrative bodies, and were now entirely restricted to the convention, where they still continued to exercise some influence by their superior talents and eloquence. Means were not spared, however, to drive them from this their last intrenchment. Marat, supported by Robespierre, tried to get up a petition against them, but was denounced by them, and made to appear before the revolutionary tribunal, by which, however, this monster was acquitted, in terms of respect; while, on the other hand, petitions from the sections poured in to the convention, demanding the expulsion of twenty-two members of the Gironde, and the popular fury, which was soon to annihilate them, grew stronger every day.

The same party dissensions which reigned in the convention were distracting the whole of France. The eastern and north-eastern departments, being most immediately threatened by foreign invasion, were the most excited, and in consequence participated in the fierce passions of the Mountainist faction. The southern departments adhered to the Girondins; in the south-eastern departments the higher classes of society, and the departmental authorities, though affecting to be Girondins, were in reality royalists, and offered the most energetic resistance to the Mountainists, who, being there in considerable minority, sought to make up in violence for their want of numbers. The city of Lyons, which was considered the rival of Paris, and whose industry had been completely destroyed by the Revolution, was the centre of opinion for the south-eastern departments, and the principal theatre of the struggles between the pretended



Girondins and the Jacobins. The latter, headed by a man named Chalier, who was denominated the Marat of the south, occupied all the municipal posts; they had levied a revolutionary army, imposed a tax of thirty millions on the rich inhabitants, and had imprisoned fifteen hundred persons, whom they threatened to *Septemberize*.\* But the other party struggled manfully against the despotism of the municipality, and bloody frays frequently broke out. On all sides the riots, which since the commencement of the Revolution had in almost unbroken succession disturbed the whole of France, now threatened to take the more serious character of civil war.

The south-west was sincerely Girondist in feelings and opinion, and the city of Bordeaux, glorying in its representatives, continued to lend them its powerful aid. In the north-west, opinions inclined more towards the constitution of '91; but in the west—that is, in Bretagne, Poitou, and Anjou†—the royalist banners had been openly unfurled, with the fixed determination of re-establishing the throne, the nobles, and the clergy. The feelings that pervaded this part of France prove that the system which the Revolution had destroyed was not necessarily one of oppression,‡ and that, wherever men are good, and fulfil their duties to their fellow-men, no system is sufficient to reduce them to misery. The peasantry of La Vendée had always found in their *seigneurs* benevolent protectors and sympathizing friends, who participated in their sorrows as in their joys, and who, though never losing their own dignity, treated their subordinates with

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\* So little remorse was felt for the horrid massacres of the prisons, that this had now become a common term among the French.

† La Vendée is the name commonly given to this part of France.

‡ When I say the system, I do not mean the *abuses*, which for ages had oppressed the people. In La Vendée the same system existed; but men were virtuous, and the consequence was happiness and contentment in all ranks, and mutual good-will between the different classes.

the respect due to them as men ; and they were, therefore, little inclined to join those who had declared " war to the palaces, and peace to the cottages." In their minds the happiness of the one was intimately connected with that of the other ; and when they beheld the revolutionists persecuting even the priests, whom they revered as the servants of God, and who, in their part of the country, though ignorant and poor, had always shown themselves worthy of their mission, they soon learned to look upon the persecutors of their pastors as enemies, and partial insurrections had frequently taken place.\* The Vendéans ill-treated the constitutional priests, and went into the woods to hear mass from their own refractory clergy, whom they kept in concealment. They placed themselves in open hostility to the inhabitants of the towns, who had embraced the revolutionary doctrines, but it was not until the convention ordered a conscription of three hundred thousand men, a measure which would have forced the young Vendéans to fight for a cause which they abhorred, that the insurrection broke out simultaneously through all La Vendée. It was on the 10th of March, the day appointed for drawing the conscription at St. Florent. The peasants disarmed the *gendarmes*, and chose as their commander a carter named Cathelineau, who was looked up to as a saint by the whole parish to which he belonged. Cathelineau's troop was afterwards joined by another under the command of Stofflet, a gamekeeper, and they began their campaign by attacking and reducing two towns, guarded by a pretty considerable force. In the commencement of April, the whole country comprised between the

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\* On one of these occasions, a peasant resisted the *gendarmes* with a pitchfork ; he had received two-and-twenty sabre strokes, when they cried to him, " Rends-toi !" " Rendez-moi mon Dieu," (give me back my God,) said the peasant, and died as the words were uttered.

ocean and the Loire, the Thoué, and the route from Thouars to Sables-d'Olonne, was in open insurrection; one hundred thousand peasants had taken to arms, and had forced their seigneurs to place themselves at their head. Those among the leaders who distinguished themselves the most, were, besides the two already mentioned, Charette, formerly an officer in the navy; d'Elbée, Lescure, Bonchamp, and Larochejacquelein, a young nobleman of most heroic valor. The Vendéans were divided into three distinct corps, which were directed by a superior council, charged with organizing and accelerating the insurrection. The peasants marched in separate divisions, according to their parishes, carrying with them provisions for a few days. After each expedition they returned again to their homes. Unacquainted with the usual military exercises, they adopted tactics perfectly adapted to the nature of their country, and peculiarly well suited to men, who, though no soldiers, were all excellent marksmen. At the approach of the enemy, they dispersed in small groups, availing themselves of the natural features of the country. From their protected positions they first poured their never-failing shot upon the inexperienced National Guards, who were sent against them, and then with loud shouts fell upon and routed their assailants.

The executive council at Paris had immediately, on hearing of the insurrection, (13th April, 1793,) ordered that an army should be raised; but a few detachments of gendarmes, and ten thousand volunteers from the neighboring departments, together with a small band of outlaws, lured from Paris by the high pay promised to them, and headed by Santerre, were the only troops they for the time could oppose to the Vendéans, who continued for some time to be victorious; but alas! even among this

virtuous and peaceful people, civil war had awakened fierce passions, and many a ruthless deed was committed.

On all sides dangers were accumulating. The whole of Bretagne and Normandy was expected to revolt. At the same time the Girondins of the south were making warlike preparations, and Bordeaux and Marseilles threatened to march troops against the convention, to protect their representatives. At Lyons the sections and the municipality were on the eve of battle, and in Corsica a revolt, suscitated by Paoli, was on the point of breaking out.

Abroad, matters were at this juncture in an equally alarming state. The Duke of Coburg, being reinforced by an army of English and Dutch, under the command of the Duke of York, had passed the frontiers, and had defeated the army under Dampierre. This commander was killed in the engagement. The Austrians advanced against Valenciennes, and the French were obliged to retreat behind the Scheldt, between Bouchain and Cambrai. On the Rhine, Custine, in consequence of a series of disastrous mistakes, was obliged to give up one place after the other, was finally driven back to Strasbourg, and completely defeated. On the 17th of May he gave in his resignation, but the convention sent him to the army of the north, where he was soon to commit new faults, to be expiated on the scaffold. In Savoy both parties remained on the defensive. In the county of Nice the French army, reduced to fifteen thousand men, had in vain attempted to throw the Piedmontese back beyond the Alps, and had finally been defeated. In the Pyrenees the French were not more successful. The Spaniards had advanced as far as Perpignan, and Deflers, who was charged with guarding this frontier, was defeated on the 19th of May.

All these disasters only the more inflamed the passions of the convention ; the mutual hatred and distrust of the two parties were daily manifested in the most scandalous scenes. The Mountainists, who knew no other remedies than violent ones, decreed, that the *maximum* price should be placed on corn, and that a forced loan of one milliard of francs should be levied on the rich ; while they continued to urge the necessity of exterminating the Girondins. These, in their turn, denounced the plots laid against them ; demanded the dismissal of the municipal authorities of Paris ; and proposed that the convention should be removed to Bourges. However, a compromise was entered into, and it was finally decreed that a commission of twelve representatives should inquire into the acts of the commune, and into the plots which threatened the representatives of the nation. But this commission, entirely composed of Girondins, immediately revealed the intentions of their party, by suppressing the revolutionary tribunals, by threatening the commune, and by allowing a report to be current that it intended likewise to suppress the extraordinary tribunal. By these measures the Girondins sealed their own doom ; they had not the necessary power for putting them into execution ; and they raised a storm which they had not the means of resisting. Commissaries, chosen by the sections, immediately formed themselves into a *central revolutionary committee*, whose first step was to propose to *Septemberize* the twenty-two most obnoxious members among the Girondins. The commission of twelve, apprized of these proceedings, issued orders for arresting the commissaries of the sections, and likewise Hébert, who, in his disgusting journal, had expressed approbation of the projects of the revolutionary committee.

The *conseil général*, of which Hébert was a member, considered itself attacked in the person of this disgraceful magistrate, "who depraved the people by his barefaced wickedness, and his openly avowed atheism;" the sections and the clubs declared themselves *en permanence*, and the commune commenced the attack by insisting upon the punishment of the twelve members, (25th May, 1793.)

Indignant at this new outrage, Isnard, the most vehement of the Girondins, allowed himself to utter violent threats against Paris, in case the sanctity of the National Assembly were violated. His words excited the fury of the Jacobins beyond all bounds. From this day until the 2d of June, Paris was in a state of the utmost tumult, and the convention was more like an arena of gladiators, than like the legislative assembly of a free people. The Gironde was doomed to meet on the 2d of June the fate under which royalty had succumbed on the 10th of August. The people, in a state of declared and organized insurrection, on that day surrounded the convention with arms and cannon, and demanded the proscription of the twenty-two members. Resistance was vain. The *sovereign* people exercised their sovereignty over their representatives, as they had formerly done over their monarch. As soon as the proscribed members were arrested, the people dispersed; but the convention had caught a glimpse of the sword of Damocles suspended over its head, and thenceforward it no longer appears in the character of a deliberative assembly, but merely in that of an ever-assenting council of state.

The fall of the Girondins left that party triumphant which may be considered as representing the feelings and opinions that had been from the commencement of

the Revolution working in the dark depths of society, and had by frequent irruptions forewarned the country of the devastation that was to ensue, when they should have overcome all resistance. Yet, even in our day, the Terrorists find their apologists, and the countless and unequalled crimes with which they have stained the annals of history, are represented as sublime efforts to save their country. But in the name of patriotism, liberty, and every noble and elevated sentiment that graces human nature, let us protest against such men as Robespierre, Marat, Couthon, St. Just, and all their infamous associates, being ranked among the defenders of such sentiments; let us not debase these by believing that they could be the instigators of deeds such as those committed during the reign of terror; let us not confuse our ideas of right and wrong by mistaking the desperate deeds of a band of outlaws, for the heroic sacrifices of despairing patriotism. France was saved by the military bravery of her sons, who, employed on the frontiers against a foreign foe, and absent from the scenes in the interior which degraded the nature of those who remained spectators of them, were inspired by the love of their country, and their hatred of a foreign yoke, and not by the abject feeling of fear.

Some of the Girondins had on the 2d of June voluntarily submitted to the orders of arrest issued against them by the triumphant faction, determined to stand their trial, and to prove their innocence; but the greater number fled to their constituents, calling upon them to save the country from the *anarchists* of Paris, who had usurped the whole power of the people. More than fifty departments were in consequence soon in open insurrection, and Caën, Bordeaux, Marseilles, and Lyons the central points of these different movements, had

their insurrectional assemblies, committees, &c., which arrogated to themselves the same powers as did those of Paris; and while all were voting and declaring the unity and indivisibility of the Republic, the state was in reality as perfectly divided by the contending factions of the Republic, as it had ever been by contending princes, and every spot of France was the theatre of bloody battles between men all professing the same principles, and, according to their own assurances, aiming at the same end—liberty. In La Vendée alone, this word was not made the pretext of the insurrection. There, the victorious Cathelineau, now at the head of sixty thousand men, had proclaimed the poor incarcerated little Dauphin, King, under the name of Louis XVII., and denominated the Vendean army *royal and catholic*. In the Cévennes, thirty thousand peasants had likewise unfurled the royal banners, and threatened to join the Vendéans, while the foreign foes pressed forward on all sides. Valenciennes and Mayence were reduced to the last extremity; Bellegarde had been taken, (24th June.) The armies of the Alps and the Pyrenees were cut off from all communication with Paris by the insurrection in the south, and were on the point of separating to march against the insurgents. Corsica, also in a state of insurrection, threatened to surrender itself to the English, whose vessels covered all the seas, took possession of the French colonies, made descents upon the coasts of France, and blockaded all her ports. The emigrants, gathering together on all points near the French frontiers, now even entered Lyons, where the Mountainists had been completely defeated by the other party, and their leader, Chalier, with three of his accomplices, had perished on the scaffold.

But perilous as this situation was, these were far from



being the only evils which pressed upon the unhappy country. The scarcity and high price of corn continued to increase. The people daily fought at the bakers doors to obtain only a scanty supply of bread. In vain those who were in want of the necessaries of life tried to obtain them in exchange for their assignats ; the venders refused to receive the worthless paper money, preferring to keep their merchandise. The sufferings of the people rose to an intolerable degree. Constant complaints were heard against the monopolists (*accaparcurs*) who bought up the commodities, and against the jobbers who raised the prices, and who discredited the assignats by their traffic.

The government, in the same distressed state as the people, had no other money wherewith to defray its expenses but these very assignats, and were obliged to give them in numbers four or five times greater than their nominal value, to pay for services which might otherwise have been obtained at a fourth or fifth of the cost ; yet they trembled to issue more assignats, fearful of still further depreciating them ; and no other means remained to provide for the subsistence of the people and of the government but recourse to new illegalities. The revolutionists had commenced by a *forced* circulation of the anticipated value of the property of the nobles and the clergy, of which they had taken possession under the name of national property, and they had now to support this circulation by *forced* means. The specie, remaining as a real measure of the value of money, became coveted by all when the assignats began to be considered as mere fictitious representatives of wealth, and the desire for obtaining specie in exchange for assignats was so great, that the latter were still more discredited by the abundance in which they were given. To prevent

this evil, the convention, in spite of the resistance of the Girondins, decreed, that whoever exchanged a certain quantity of silver or gold for a greater nominal quantity of assignats, should be punished with six years imprisonment, and the same punishment was to be inflicted on those who should demand a different price for their merchandise according to whether the payment were made in specie or in assignats. But matters were only made worse by this interference. In June one franc in silver was worth three francs in assignats; and in August it had risen in value to six francs in assignats. The merchants, of course, insisted on being paid for their goods according to this value, and the unhappy working men, who received their pay in assignats according to the nominal value of them, while they had to purchase the necessaries of life according to the value of specie, were, of course, reduced to the greatest misery, which they, in their ignorance, still farther aggravated by the violence to which they were driven by the phrensy of despair. To obviate this evil of the rise of prices, *maximum* prices had been fixed, and those who were convicted of having sold or bought above these prices were punished with confiscation of the goods in question, and with a fine of from three hundred to a thousand francs. The most oppressive police interference was rendered necessary by these measures; and, added to all the other domiciliary visits to which the French had to submit during the reign of *unrestrained liberty*, were those for ascertaining the quantity of bread they had in their houses. The commune of Paris, adding its police regulations to those of the convention, had, besides, regulated the distribution of bread at the bakers' shops. No one was allowed to appear there without a card of safety, (*carte de sureté.*) On these cards, issued by the revolutionary committees,

the quantity of bread was mentioned which the person presenting it was entitled to receive, and this quantity was regulated according to the number of individuals belonging to the family. Even the order to be maintained outside the baker's door was regulated by these authorities. To avoid confusion, a rope was fastened to the door, and every new-comer took hold of it so as to be sure of not losing his right of precedence. Wicked women,\* however, often cut the rope, and produced such tumultuous scenes that it was necessary to put them down by force of arms.† But it was not bread alone that was dear; every necessary of life was as difficult to obtain, and the people, blind to its own faults, persisted in attributing all the mischief to those they denominated the monopolists, and sought redress for suffering in crime. Robbery and pillage became so common, that the commune directed the Mayor Pache to issue the following laconic proclamation:

“Paris contains seven hundred thousand inhabitants; the soil of Paris produces nothing for their food, their apparel, nor their whole subsistence. Paris must therefore procure all its provisions from the other departments, and from foreign countries.

“If when goods and merchandise arrive in Paris the inhabitants will pillage them, no more shall be sent; Paris will then not have any thing for the sustenance and the clothing of its numerous inhabitants, and seven hun-

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\* Nothing so strongly paints the state of demoralization that prevailed in France at that period, as the disgraceful part which the women took in every scene of riot and bloodshed. What must not be the moral degeneracy of the people, when the guardian of the peaceful hearth, the mother of the family, is mixing in scenes of wild and unbridled passion, is imbruing her own hands in blood, is spurring on her husband and sons to lawless deeds, instead of awaiting them at home to exercise over them the purifying influence of a calm and holy spirit!

† Thiers.

dred thousand men, deprived of every thing, will devour each other."

The people ceased to pillage; but their distrust and hatred continued against those who, being richer, were able to speculate, when to the people was left nothing but to starve; these hostile feelings were, alas! not unfounded, for even members of the convention, those who spoke the loudest of equality and fraternity, were not ashamed to enrich themselves by iniquitous means.

These difficulties accumulated on all sides; and the fact of the ruling faction in France having for a time been able to contend against, and in a certain measure to subdue them, has probably given rise to that enthusiasm which has so far blinded historians even of the present day, as to lead them to excuse as necessary the means which this faction used. But even this excuse, immoral and demoralizing as it is, vanishes, when we see that the greatest difficulties had disappeared before the most extreme measures were put in action, and that the iniquities committed by the Terrorists stood in no possible connection with the difficulties they had to contend with. Streams of blood flowing on the scaffold could not by any possibility fill the government coffers, and thousands of French men and women sacrificed on the guillotine could not repel the foreign foe from the frontiers.

Two months after the expulsion of the Girondins from the convention, matters had already taken a much more favorable turn for the Mountainists. The foreign armies, instead of taking advantage of the disturbed state of the country, and using prompt and energetic measures, acted slowly and feebly; while the Girondins, though having the greater part of the country on their side, were undecided and disunited. The talents which had but too well sufficed for destruction, were far from

being great enough for reconstruction ; though these men, in their short-sighted incapacity, had had no scruples as long as the question was merely to destroy monarchy and every vestige of the ancient state of things, they, nevertheless, were sincerely attached to their country, which they saw must inevitably fall a prey to foreigners if the civil war between Mountainists and Girondins was to continue. They had not the *energy of crime*, which their opponents possessed ; being therefore unable to subject the other party, they were themselves obliged to yield.

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## CHAPTER VII.

Decree against the Insurgents—Their submission—Charlotte Corday kills Marat—Honors shown to his memory—The Vendéans defeated—Submission of the South—Lyons continues in revolt—Toulon surrenders in trust to the English—The Committee of Public Safety—Decrees of the Convention—Increase in severity—Vigorous measures for carrying on the War—Revolutionary Army—Arrests made by authority of the Revolutionary Committees—The Reign of Terror—Progress of the War—The surrender of Lyons—Fall of Toulon—The Vendéans still further reduced—Dreadful Tyranny—Execution of the Queen—of the Princess Elizabeth—of the Girondins—Execution of numberless Victims—Increasing number of Prisoners—Instances of sublime virtue—of disgusting levity—Atrocities at Lyons—at Nantes.

THE convention had, immediately after the 2d of June, decreed that all the absent deputies had forfeited their places, and that these were to be filled by their substitutes, (*suppléants*;) that the instigators of the insurrections in the departments, the authorities of those departments, and the leaders of the insurgents, were outlawed, and orders were given to the troops of the convention to attack the insurgents on all points. A constitution, which had been framed in *eight days*, was then accepted

by the convention on the 24th June, and with this constitution in their hand they offered peace or extermination to the Girondin insurgents, who submitted, being at that moment farther intimidated by the defeat of their general, Wimpfen, who, by his proposition to them to seek succors from the English, had revealed that he was only a royalist in disguise. The deputies of this party, who had been assembled at Caën, fled to Bordeaux, which however also soon accepted the new constitution, and received within its walls the two representatives, Tallien and Ysabeau, sent thither by the convention, to reinstate Mountainists in the municipality, to disarm the inhabitants, and to erect scaffolds for the proscribed, against whom the hatred of the Mountainists had been still farther exasperated by the death of Marat, which was attributed to their machinations.

Marat, of all the hideous abortions of those times the most hideous, had been killed in his bath by Charlotte Corday, a beautiful and intellectual young woman of Caën, of a gentle heart but an ardent mind, glowing with love of her country, and conceiving its future destinies entirely hanging upon the success of the Girondins. In Marat she saw their most ferocious, (and she therefore thought) their most dangerous opponent and persecutor; and such was the confusion of moral perceptions, even of the best in France, at that day, that she could devise no better means of serving what she considered the cause of virtue, than the commission of a crime. She secretly left her family at Caën, and repaired to Paris, where she obtained an interview with Marat, under pretext of having something of importance to reveal to him about the Girondins. She was introduced to him while he was lying in his bath, so anxious was he to lose no time in obtaining the intelligence she

had to communicate. The young girl reported to him what she had seen of the Girondin movement at Caën. Marat having asked the names of the deputies gathered together there, Charlotte Corday fixed her eyes steadily on him, while she repeated the names, and he wrote them down. "That is well," said the bloody monster, "they shall all go to the guillotine!" And with these words on his lips, he was sent to answer before God for the crimes\* with which he had defiled the earth; the young girl's dagger was buried in his breast. She was immediately arrested, and when brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal, exhibited in her answers the same heroic enthusiasm: "I have killed," said she, "one man to save a hundred thousand—a depraved wretch, to save the innocent; a ferocious monster, to procure peace to my country."

Charlotte Corday had rid the world of a monster; she had forgotten the teachings of Him who has told us not to do evil that good may come from it, and thinking that she had acted virtuously, she died with the fortitude such a feeling inspires. But the populace could scarcely await the moment, so impatient were they to be revenged on the murderess of "the people's friend;" and the incredible honors shown to the memory of this depraved wretch, give a picture of moral degradation which the mind can with difficulty conceive. The Cordelier Club raised an altar to his heart, his portrait was seen everywhere, and the convention decreed that his earthly remains should be deposited in the Pantheon.

In the west and the south, events also turned to the advantage of the convention. The Vendéans, who limited their enterprises to taking the towns of their own

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\* There is no particular criminal *deed* attributed to Marat by the historians of those times. But no crime can equal that of polluting the mind of a whole nation.

provinces, which were as zealously republican as the peasantry were royalist, instead of taking advantage of their victories, to extend their power beyond the limits of their part of the country, concentrated all their forces for an attack against Nantes, the chief town of that neighborhood, and which seemed to them even more important than Paris. For the first time the armies of Upper and Lower Vendée united, but in vain; Nantes heroically repelled the attack of their vastly superior numbers, and Cathelineau, to whom was given the command of the joint armies, lost his life in the affair. Nantes was saved for the convention, and the power of the Vendéans was broken. Thirty thousand insurgents in the south were at the same time put down by the deputy Fabre de l'Hérault, and an unexpected victory over the Spaniards in Roussillon achieved the submission of the south.

Lyons continued in open revolt, raised an army of twenty thousand men, which it placed under the command of two royalists, Précý and Virieu, and opened negotiations with the king of Sardinia. At Marseilles, where the royalists also had the ascendancy, the new constitution was rejected; and ten thousand men were marched towards Avignon, but these were beaten by five or six thousand republicans, a detachment from the army of the Alps, who then took possession of Marseilles, and re-established the authority of the convention in that town, (25th August, 1793.) The royalists of Provence then sought refuge in Toulon, which strongly participated in their hatred of the Mountainist faction, many of whom had perished on the scaffold. The Toulonnaise, closing their gates upon the republican forces, proclaimed Louis XVII. king, and delivered up their port to the English fleet, under Admiral Hood, (27th August.) Mayence and Valenciennes were in the hands of the enemy,



the first since 25th July, the second since 28th of the same month.

On the 27th of July, 1793, the committee of public safety, which had been accused of weakness, was renewed, and was this time composed of men, who certainly had the energy not to shrink before any measures. These men, who governed France from the 10th of July, 1793, until the 27th of July, 1794, were Barrère, Jean-Bon-Saint-André, Couthon, Herault-Séchelles, Saint-Just, Robert Lindet, Prieur de la Marne, Robespierre, Carnot, Prieur de la Côte-d'Or, Billaud-Vareunes, and Collot d'Herbois. On the proposition of this committee, the convention immediately decreed : That the English government\* should be denounced to all nations, and even to the English, as having in its pay assassins and incendiaries. That Pitt should be declared the enemy of the human race ; that all British subjects in France should be arrested, and all British goods prohibited from entering the country. That Marie Antoinette should be summoned before the revolutionary tribunal. That the two and twenty fugitive Girondins should be declared outlawed, and all the others be put under arrest to stand their trial. That the royal tombs at St. Denis should be destroyed ; the property of all outlawed persons be confiscated ; and that the garrison which had hitherto occupied Mayence should be removed to La Vendée, and the population of that tract of country be transplanted, its harvests destroyed, its houses demolished, its woods burnt down, and the inhabitants of the neighboring departments, from the age of eighteen to that of sixty, be transplanted thither.

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\* The English Government was particularly hated by the Jacobins, and Pitt was accused of using the most atrocious means for putting down the Revolution.

But these measures, tyrannical and despotic as they were, were soon to be thrown into the shade by others still more atrocious. On the 10th of August the acceptance of the constitution by the primary assemblies, convoked for the occasion, was celebrated at Paris, by a symbolical pagan fête, in which the statues of Nature and Reason, the divinities of the revolutionists, played the most prominent part, and the enthusiasm inspired by the spectacles it offered, was expressed in a demand made to the convention by the commissaries of the sections to order a *levée en masse*, in order to save the republic. In accordance with which, the convention decreed, (23d August :) “From that moment until the soil of France should be purged of its enemies, the French of both sexes and all ages should be in permanent requisition for the service of the armies.” The particular functions of all were regularly laid down. Besides this, the public edifices were converted into barracks, the public squares into military workshops, and the floors of all cellars were ordered to be washed, to extract from them the saltpetre they might contain. In a word, the whole of France was converted into one vast camp, and the sword of the authorities rivalled those of the armies, in spreading havoc and devastation. A revolutionary army of six thousand soldiers, and one thousand artillery men, was placed at the disposal of the convention, to enforce the execution of its orders. Every poor citizen was allowed forty sous a day, that he might assist in the assembly of the sections, and give the majority to the lower classes; and the public functionaries were placed under the inspection of the clubs. It was farther decreed that all suspected persons should be kept in prison, until peace was re-established: by suspected persons were understood all those who, by words, actions, or writings, had

shown themselves partisans of royalty or of federalism, all relatives of emigrants, all discharged functionaries, &c. The true definition of what was meant by suspected persons in those days, would have been all whose life or liberty might in any way interfere with the convenience of those who had the power to take it. Such it showed itself to be in its workings. The arrests were made by the revolutionary committees established in every section of the communes, and these were responsible to the committee for *general safety*. The substance of the revolutionary code, says Toulangeon, was: "Be it known to all Frenchmen, that the life, the liberty, and the property of every one of them, is at the arbitrary disposal of ten men, whom the convention has fixed upon: they will dispose of your persons by the acts of a tribunal, which shall judge, without any regular forms and indictments; pronounce upon its own view of the case; and neither admit any means of defence or mode of appeal. At the first requisition of delegates from this authority, you shall march to join the armies; you shall deliver up, without delay or remonstrance, whatever they may think proper to take from your moveable property, at whatever price they shall choose to fix, represented to you by any token that it may be convenient to them to issue. Before these delegates of established authority, all other authorities shall cease; and you shall acknowledge as law, and you shall immediately execute, whatever they may think proper to prescribe. Every infraction of these regulations shall instantly be followed by death." "The system," continues the same author, "was simply that of terror, and never had a policy an effect so prompt, so general, and so sure; one head struck off, and a thousand bent themselves down at the very sight of the hatchet, which was now become the

image of the law ; the sentiment of fear and respect, which the apparatus of public justice always imposes, now struck an icebolt into every heart, and commanded at once the exertion of every arm. Some, at the first signal, and often without waiting for the signal, flew to the armies on the frontiers, as to an asylum ; others, detained near the functionaries of the law, lent their ministry to the perpetration of murders, that were sanctioned by a legal form and appearance ; and those who were marked out for their victims, having no resource, neither in the laws themselves, nor in any public force or authority, resigned themselves without further resistance, and appealed, while expiring, to the justice of heaven and to posterity.”\*

The soldiers of France, the only *active* part of the nation which during this wretched period showed itself worthy of esteem, were in the mean while doing their duty, but with variable success. The old system of war had been superseded by a new one, in which, according to the principles of Carnot, the want of art was supplied by numbers, and by audacity ; a manner which was quite in accordance with the untutored genius of the young men, who, by favor of the republican system, were able to rise from the ranks to the higher grades ; and many of whom have since filled the world with their renown.

After having taken Valenciennes and Condé, blockaded Maubeuge and Le Quesnoy, the enemy, under the command of the Duke of York, had marched upon Cassel, Hondscoote, and Furnes, and laid siege to Dunkirk. The committee of public safety, dissatisfied with Custine, who was accused of being the cause of the loss of

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\* Toulangeon's evidence cannot be suspected of exaggeration, as he is one of those historians who excuse, on the plea of necessity, these atrocious measures.

Valenciennes, had replaced him by General Houchard. The enemy, until that period victorious, was defeated at Hondscote, and forced to retreat. A military reaction commenced with the decisive measures of the committee of public safety. Houchard himself was dismissed. Jourdain took the command of the army of the north, gained the important victory of Watignies against the Prince of Coburg, forced the enemy to raise the siege of Maubeuge, and reassumed the offensive on the frontier. The armies of the Rhine and the Moselle, discouraged after the loss of Mayence, had fallen back upon the Sarre and the Lauter; but the Prussian and Austrian generals who were opposed to them, not being in good intelligence with each other, failed to take advantage of this discouragement, and the French were, after two months spent in insignificant skirmishes, able again to take the offensive. They were, however, defeated at Pirmasens, (13th October, 1793,) and were soon after obliged to retire, the army of the Rhine to Saverne, and the army of the Moselle to Sarreguemines. In consequence of these defeats, the authorities of Strasbourg conspired to deliver up the town to the enemy; and the whole of Alsace was inundated with emigrants, who sought to win for their cause the population of this province, which had not yet imbibed the revolutionary ideas. But the committee immediately sent Lebas and St. Just thither to counteract these movements, and named Hoche to the command of the army of the Moselle, and Pichegru to that of the Rhine. The two representatives ordered neighboring departments to rise, reorganized the army, punished the conspirators, and made every one tremble at the tyrannical energy so strikingly manifested in their severe and laconic orders. "Ten thousand men belonging to the army," said these

orders, "are shoeless ; you must *unshoe* (*déchausser*) the aristocrats of Strasbourg, and to-morrow before ten o'clock the ten thousand pairs of shoes must be on their way to general quarters. All the cloaks of the citizens of Strasbourg are required for the army : they must be delivered to-morrow evening in the magazines of the republic. The municipality of Strasbourg must keep in readiness within four-and-twenty hours, in the houses of the rich inhabitants, two thousand beds to be delivered up to the soldiers. A loan of nine millions must be immediately levied upon the rich, two millions of which shall be appropriated to the indigent, one million to the town, and six millions to the army. The richest individual subjected to this tax, who has not within four-and-twenty hours complied with this order, shall be publicly exposed for three hours on the scaffolding of the guillotine." The two young republican generals on their side took such efficient steps, that the enemy soon lost the recently acquired advantages, and were obliged to withdraw beyond the Rhine, (28th December,) while the French took up their winter quarters in the Palatinate. In the Pyrenees the French armies were less fortunate ; after repeated engagements with the Spaniards, who continued to press forward, and in which the victory was sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, the French army at the close of the year, (1793,) having lost its commander, Fabre de l'Hérault, had retired under the walls of Perpignan in a state of complete discouragement.

The principal efforts of the committee were directed against Lyons, Toulon, and La Vendée, the subjection of the insurgents in the interior being of the most vital importance, even with regard to resistance to the foreign foes. Twenty-five thousand Piedmontese, descending

the Alps, were marching to the aid of Lyons, which during six weeks had been blockaded, and had suffered a severe bombardment by a detachment of the army of the Alps, under Dubois-Crancé, when they were attacked by Kellermann, at the head of twelve thousand newly levied troops, and thrown back into their own country. The victorious troops then joined the besiegers, and formed, with the *levée en masse* of Auvergne, which had also been brought thither by Couthon, an army of forty thousand men. The inhabitants of Lyons, reduced by famine, and hoping to save their town from utter devastation, surrendered, without conditions, on the 9th October, 1793. The besieging army then divided: one division took up its former position in Savoy, and the other moved towards Toulon, to join the small army which for two months had been blockading this town. In consequence of the able attack, directed by a young artillery officer—Napoleon Bonaparte, a name which was soon to eclipse every other in the annals of France—the forts L'Eguillette and Balaguier, which commanded the city, were taken. No longer being able to hold the town, the English considered it advisable to evacuate the place without delay. The wretched inhabitants crowded to the shores, and demanded their promised protection; great efforts were made, and thousands were conveyed on board the shipping, but thousands more were left to suffer all that the rage and vengeance of their countrymen could inflict. Fire was set to the arsenals, the docks, and to the French ships in the port. The republicans, seeing the flames rising from the fort, rushed against the gates of the city, with cries of rage, and entered the half-deserted town on the 19th December.

In La Vendée the war was carried on with extreme

cruelty and intolerable sufferings on both sides, and with varying success. The Vendéans, however, had never regained their full strength after the defeat of Nantes, and at length, having lost nearly all their leaders except the young Larochejacquelin, Charette, and Stofflet,\* they marched about in large bands without plan or object, strewing their path with the dead bodies of their wives and children, who dropped down from want of food and other sufferings. On the 12th of December, the republican general, Marceau, attacked them in the streets of the town of Mans, where eighteen thousand of them, comprising women and children, were regularly butchered. Those that escaped were again attacked on the 22d of December, and were all taken or killed, with the exception of about a thousand men who escaped into Bretagne. But La Vendée nevertheless continued in a very troubled state, the peasantry, though reduced, having nowise submitted.

The horrors of war were nothing compared to the fearful ravages committed by the Committee of Public Safety, in the name of the country which they were deluging with the blood of its innocent children.

An historian, who was an eye-witness of the scenes he describes, and personally acquainted with the principal victims of this inhuman system, speaks of it as follows: "What then was this revolutionary government decreed by the Convention? It seems a contradiction in terms, but I can speak of its effects: every right, civil and political, was thrown into disorder and even destroyed; the liberty of the press, and all liberty of thought, were at an end; the whole people were

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\* For a full detail of this dreadful war of La Vendée, and of its heroic leaders, the reader is referred to the intensely interesting *Memoirs of Madame Larochejacquelin*.



divided into two classes, the privileged and the proscribed; property was violated without the slightest ceremony; *lettres de cachet* were re-established and multiplied in the most scandalous manner; the asylum of our dwellings was exposed to an inquisition of the most tyrannical nature; the forms of justice were stripped of every appearance of humanity and honor. France covered with lock-up houses and prisons; all the excesses of anarchy and despotism struggling with each other in noisy commotion, amid a confused multitude of committees of every possible name and nature; terror and consternation in every heart; the scaffold devouring every day a hundred victims, and threatening every day to devour a still greater number; in every house, a universal melancholy and mourning, in every public street and place the silence of the tomb. Such was this incredible system, that annihilated all persons, all property, every thing. War was waged against nature in her tenderest emotions. Was a tear shed over the tomb of a father, a wife, a friend, it was, according to these Jacobins, a robbery of the republic. Grief, they held, was not to be confined within domestic limits. Not to rejoice when the Jacobins rejoiced, not to rejoice, though in the loss of relations and in the severing of all ties that bind one to existence, was to conspire against the republic.”\*

The two most illustrious of the victims, who fell a sacrifice to the passions or the madness of those who ruled in France, and the most deserving of our compassion on account of the high position from which they had fallen, and the thousand tortures they had to endure before death put an end to their sufferings, were the queen and the Princess Elizabeth.

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\* Desodards.

They had continued in rigorous confinement since the death of the king, and every day had brought them new humiliations, new proofs of the baseness of those in whose power they were, a baseness which was not satisfied, until the poor sickly little Dauphin was torn from his mother, to whose other cruel trials, were thus added the image of her suffering child, delivered over to the tender mercies of a brutal and unfeeling republican, his little heart overwhelmed with an experience of misery far beyond his years. On the 2d of August, the queen was, according to a decree of the convention, removed from the Temple to the Conciergerie, where she was lodged in a low, narrow, damp room upon the ground floor. She there breathed the putrid air exhaled in the neighborhood. Girths tied together in several places with ropes in a paltry frame, a ragged mattress, a decayed paillasse, and an old worn-out dirty blanket, composed the bed of the queen of France.\* Placed before the tribunal, she replied with great calmness to the accusations brought against her, of having dilapidated the treasury, of having called in the aid of the foreigners, of having exercised a culpable influence over the king, &c.; she met with the greatest dignity the insults of her inhuman judges. Transported to the guillotine on a common tumbril, on the 16th of October, 1793, she died, manifesting the same resignation and fortitude with which she had throughout borne her sufferings.

The Princess Elizabeth, whose virtuous life was unsullied by a single fault, met the same fate on the 10th of May, 1794.† When the princess was brought before the revolutionary tribunal, she appeared with the gentle dignity that belonged to her before her judges, who as-

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\* Hué.

† She was accused of having transmitted some jewels to her emigrant brothers.

sailed her in the harshest manner and in terms the most offensive; but when they proceeded to speak of her brother as a tyrant, the Christian spirit even of this angel of piety and meekness emitted a hasty spark, and she exclaimed: "Tyrant! Had my brother been a tyrant, neither you nor I had filled the places which we now do."\*

The queen was followed in death by as many of the Girondins as were in the power of the committee. They pleaded so eloquently for themselves, that Robespierre, to guard in future against the embarrassment which such eloquence caused even the shameless judges of such a tribunal as that before which they stood, had a decree passed, authorizing the jury to declare themselves, after three days' debates, sufficiently informed of the case before them. The Girondins died as they had lived, as enthusiasts, and with the proud indifference to pain of the Stoics, not with the sublimer endurance of Christians.

One of them, Valazé, put an end to his own life with a knife; his companions marched to the scaffold singing the Marseillaise. Barbaroux was executed at Bordeaux; others of their party, Pétion, Buzot, Condorcet, &c., fell by their own hand, to avoid the shame of a public execution; and even the calm and moderate Roland stabbed himself, on learning that his young and enthusiastic wife had been made to expiate on the scaffold the sin of not having gone so far in her blind love of liberty as those who had profited but too well by the teachings of her party. "Oh, liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" were her dying words. Oh that she had made this discovery sooner! Bailly was executed on the Champ de Mars, with refinements of cruelty. The Duke of Orleans, completely disgusted with the world,

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\* Toulangeon.

in which he himself had played a most disgusting part, died with utter indifference. (6th Nov.) The Girondins, Kersaint, Manuel, Rabaud Saint Etienne, were the next victims; after them the Feuillants, Barnave and Duport-Dutertre; then the generals Biron, Houchard, Custine, Brunet, Lamarliere, Luckner. But volumes\* would not hold the names of those who fell the victims of the ferocious monsters of hypocrisy, who dared to profane the sacred image of liberty, by presenting it as a famished vulture that could never be sufficiently gorged with human blood. Infancy and age, grace and beauty, were all alike the prey of this false image, and human life was sported with without the slightest shame or remorse. Often one person arrested, received an act of accusation intended for another. Mistakes of the most inconceivable nature were made with impunity: the Dowager Duchess of Biron was judged upon an act of accusation drawn up against her agent. A young man of only twenty was taken to execution for having a son then bearing arms (as it was alleged) against France. Another young man of sixteen, of the name of Mallet, was brought before the tribunal, but a man of the name of Bellay, of the age of forty, was the intended prisoner. "What is your age?" said the president; looking at him with some surprise. "Sixteen." "Well, you are quite forty in crime," replied the bloody magistrate, "take him away to the guillotine." From every corner of France victims were brought in carts to the Conciergerie. This prison was emptied and refilled every day, by daily massacres, and by transfers from other prisons. These removals were made when it was dark; in the fear, no

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\* The numbers of accused confined in the prisons of Paris alone, on the 1st of September, 1793, were 597; 1st of October, 2400; 1st of November, 3203; 1st of December, 4130; and six months after, just before the fall of Robespierre, they amounted to 11,400.

doubt, that the sensibility of the spectators might be excited by the deplorable state of the prisoners. Fifty or sixty poor creatures securely bound with cords, conducted by men of ferocious aspect, a drawn sabre in one hand, and a lighted torch in the other, passed in this manner through the silence of the night. The passenger who happened to meet them, had to keep his pity well concealed in the bottom of his heart, if he wished to preserve his own liberty: a sigh that had escaped him, would instantly have united him to the unhappy beings who composed the funeral train before him. The prisons multiplied in every quarter of Paris, and were the abode of every possible species of suffering. The Committee of Public Safety had calculated the quantity of air and light that was necessary for the mere existence of their victims. The despair that reigned in the vaults of these sepulchres, presented itself in forms the most terrific; one finished his unhappy existence by poison; another dispatched himself by a nail, that he buried in his heart; one opened his veins with the first sharp instrument that he could seize; another dashed his head against the bars of the casements; some lost their reason; those who had sufficient fortitude waited patiently for the executioner, or gave into the snares which they knew were laid for them by the spies that surrounded them. Every house of arrest was required to furnish a certain number of victims. The turnkeys went with these mandates of accusation from chamber to chamber in the dead of the night; the prisoners, starting from their sleep at the voice of their Cerberus, supposed their end had arrived; and it was thus that warrants of death for thirty, threw into a state of consternation many hundreds. At first the officers of justice ranged fifteen at a time in their carts, which Barrière called "live coffins,

soon after thirty, and about the time of the fall of Robespierre, preparations had been made for the execution of a hundred and fifty at a time. An aqueduct had been contrived to carry off the blood.\* Sometimes whole generations were destroyed in a day. Malesherbes, at the age of eighty, perished with his sister, his daughter, his son-in-law, his grandson, and his granddaughter; Montmorin with his son; four of the family of Brienne. Forty young women were brought to the guillotine for having danced at a ball given by the King of Prussia at Verdun; and twenty-two peasant women were sacrificed whose husbands had been executed in La Vendée.

But amidst these scenes of cruelty and despair, are not wanting traits of sublime patience, of heroic self-sacrificing affection, and dignified self-respect, which cheer the heart with the feeling, that over the soul tyranny can exercise no power. A father and a son were confined in the same prison: the son was summoned to the revolutionary tribunal, but was out of the way at the moment. The father, taking advantage of his absence, presented himself in his stead to the turnkey, was tried and condemned, and died in the hope of having saved the life of his son. Another prisoner sacrificed himself in like manner for his brother. The wife of the commandant of Longwy cried out, "Vive le roi," upon learning the condemnation of her husband, and within hearing of his judges, who instantly sentenced her to die with him. "It was all I wanted!" she then exclaimed with a triumphant smile. The Comte d'Estaing, distinguished in the naval annals of France, was asked his name. "My name," he said, "is sufficiently known: when you have taken off my head, carry it to the English; they will recognise it, and pay you well

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\* Desodards.

for it." Isabeau, formerly registrar of the parliament of Paris, was brought before the revolutionary tribunal, sitting in the place where the parliament used to hold its sittings. "Do you remember this place?" asked the president. "Oh, yes!" replied Isabeau: "It was here that not long ago virtue was the judge of guilt; and it is here that guilt now puts innocence to death."

But it was not all who bore misfortune with dignity. Among those classes whose vices, whose love of pleasure, and whose blind and degraded self-love, had greatly contributed to bring about the fearful state of things that actually existed,—among these classes, pleasure was still the only thought, and frivolity was the order of the day, even within the grim walls of the prisons from which the guillotine alone could rescue them. Even in the face of death, thronged in fetid receptacles, where they suffered from the want of air, and were deprived of all exercise, and even almost of power of motion, they knew nothing higher to fly to, in order to escape from the sense of their misery, than the gaming table and the pleasures of the palate. The prisoners of the higher class scrupulously kept up the same etiquette which they used to observe in their *salons* of the Faubourg St. Germain, formed their own society apart, and expended on the table such sums as they could yet command. After attending to their own little concerns in the morning, they assembled in the common room in the evening, worked, read, and chatted with each other, and poets recited their verses, and musicians gave their concerts, and everybody laughed and amused themselves, as if some one of the mighty monarchs who had pampered them with riches and power was still seated on his throne, and the fierce demagogues that were raging without their prison walls, were still the submissive

*canaille* they could trample on at their pleasure. In the Luxemburg prison, the ladies amused themselves with acting the guillotine; and when a lady had been sufficiently practised to fall upon the chair that represented the fearful instrument of death, and go through her execution gracefully, the spectators expressed their admiration by clapping of hands and shouts of bravo.\* At a later period, the convention, jealous of the pleasures enjoyed by their victims, put an end to them, by prohibiting their assembling together, except at their meals, which were served up on large tables, where all ranks were seated together *pêle-mêle*, and which consisted of bad and unwholesome food, provided for them by the committee.

Of all the revolted towns, Lyons was the one that suffered most. The convention decreed its destruction, and ordered that of the houses of the poor, and the public edifices, which were to be spared, a new city should be formed to bear the name of the *Freel Commune*, (*commune affranchie*.) Fouché and Collot d'Herbois were sent thither with two thousand men of the revolutionary army, and where destruction was the end in view, no better emissaries could have been chosen, than these two monsters in human shape. They carried on the work of destruction with ten thousand workmen, and the finest streets of the city were soon heaps of ruin. They created a commission of five judges, (similar to the murderers of September,) who condemned and sent to meet their death, seven persons within one quarter of an hour, and according to their own accounts, sentenced altogether one thousand six hundred and eighty individuals to death. But the hammer and the guillotine were soon found to be too slow instruments of destruction, and mines were employed to demolish the buildings, and

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\* Mongaillard, Thiers.



bombs and cannonballs to crush their inhabitants. The full consciousness and perfect deliberation with which all the atrocities of this revolution were committed, were also evinced on this occasion by Fouché, who wrote : " Let us exercise justice upon the model of nature ! Let us take revenge on a whole nation ! Let us strike like the thunderbolt ! "

Caën and Marseilles, having easily submitted, suffered less, but at Bordeaux, Tallien gorged himself with blood. At Toulon the commissaries of the convention steeped the earth in blood, and at Nantes, the most atrocious deeds that the imagination can picture, were exercised by Carrier, a being to whom the appellation of man can scarcely be applied. He had the inhabitants of twenty-two communes, that had already submitted, massacred ; he sank in the sea, boats filled with fifteen hundred men, women, and children ; he had men and women coupled together and thrown into the Loire, a mode of execution which he called *republican marriages* ; and the river swallowed up so many victims, that it was forbidden to drink of its polluted waters. " With the sword ever ready in his hand, and blasphemies on his lips," this low-lived Nero found worthy accomplices in the members of the revolutionary committee of Nantes, and executioners in a troop of banditti, who called themselves Marat's company. Carrier, in league with these wild beasts, himself no better than they, allowed himself and them to commit every species of crime, and the number of victims is said to have amounted to fifteen thousand. Here again the atrocities of a corrupt imagination, the wild deeds of madmen, are attributed to the love of liberty and mankind. " It is from a love of humanity, that I purge the land of liberty of these monsters," wrote Carrier to the convention.

In all parts of France the same crimes were being committed, the same lying blasphemies were being pronounced: in no other way did unity exist.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

Division of the prevailing Faction into three parts—Profanation of Religion—Change in the Calendar—Religion abolished—Danton and his party shocked at these excesses—*Le Vicux Cordelier*—Stigma cast upon the English—The toleration of other Religions besides the worship of Reason allowed—Fall of the Hébertists—Fall of the Dantonists—Decrees of the Convention—Robespierre's policy—The Reign of Terror at its height—The French defeated at sea; victorious on land—Distress of the people—Oppressive interference of Government—The Revolutionary Army dissolved—The Clubs suppressed—Butchery continued—Robespierre's speech—Discontent—Attempt of Ladmiral—The power of the Committee still further strengthened in consequence—Robespierre above all—Fête of the "Universal Religion of Nature"—Envy excited by Robespierre—*Law of 22d Prairial*—Robespierre absents himself from the Convention—The work of blood continues with fearful rapidity—Fouquier's refinement of wickedness—Extraordinary mistakes committed—Robespierre appears again—Accusations against him—Violent commotions—Arrest of Robespierre and others—Insurrection in consequence—The prisoners retaken—Brutal Manifestations—Execution of Robespierre and his colleagues.

TOWARDS the end of the year 1793, when matters without had ceased to bear so very menacing an aspect, the faction which was deluging the soil of France with the blood of its citizens, under pretence of saving the country from the danger of utter annihilation with which it was threatened by the foreign invaders, and the conspirators within who were in league with them—this faction split into three distinct factions, that of the *exaggerators*, headed by Hébert; that of the *moderators*, headed by Danton; and that of Robespierre, the one actually in power.

The faction of Hébert was predominant in the commune, and was supported by the vile bands which con-

stituted the revolutionary army, and by those members of the convention who were exercising their bloody mission at Lyons, Toulon, and Nantes. The men of this faction represented the wildest, most ferocious, and the most insane of the notions that were afloat in France during this period of social dissolution. Their ideas of political economy were manifested by their turning all gardens into potato fields, and by wearing wooden shoes to reduce the price of leather, while their love of equality exacted the cessation of all courtesy in mutual intercourse, and all decency in dress. They gloried in never being seen but in the dirty rags of the *sansculottes*, and in never addressing any one by any other title than that of his name. Followers of the school of Marat, they even surpassed their master in all that was atrocious, and what he only pictured to himself in the ravings of his perverted imagination, they had the power and the will to put into practice. "*Le père Duchêne*,"\* said Camille Desmoulins, "in order to escape from his remorse and from his calumnies needs more powerful intoxication than that of wine; he requires continually to lick the blood that flows at the foot of the guillotine."† These men were aiming to convert the executioner's hatchet, which they so ably wielded, into a regular sceptre of government, and to supersede the committee, which did not go through the murderous work with sufficient dispatch for them. But they masked the plans which they entertained against the convention and the committee under their hatred to Danton and his adherents, whom they accused of seeking to make the revolution retrograde; while they showed the lengths to which their inclinations would lead them by a measure which

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\* This was the name under which Hébert wrote his infamous journal.

† *Le Vieux Cordelier*, No. 4. A paper edited by Camille Desmoulins.

excited much disgust even at that time, but which, however, was only the continuance of the same course in which the revolution had hitherto moved. The convention had despoiled the churches of their sacred vases, had applauded the priests who broke the laws of the church, had allowed the commune to interdict public worship, to take the crosses from the graves in the cemeteries, to change the names of the streets designated by those of saints, and to close the seminaries. It had further authorized its commissioners "to imprison the black animals by dozens," and had applauded one of its members, Dupont, who loudly proclaimed, "Nature and reason are the two divinities of man; they are my God! . . . I frankly confess that I am an atheist." Besides, the convention had ordered a total change in the calendar. Frenchmen dated from the era of the republic of 1792, or from the year One. The year commenced on the 22d of September, 1792, the day of the first meeting of the convention, and was divided into twelve months\* of thirty days each, designated by magnificent names borrowed from the seasons, (but which, unfortunately, only accorded with the climate of Paris.) The months were divided into decades of ten days. The five complementary days at the end of the year were honored with the name of *sans-culottides*, (days without breeches.)

Can we be astonished that after such steps towards the suppression of every thing which the Christian religion has sanctified, the Hébertists should propose the formal abolition of this religion?

Those that see the workings of systems, and a progres-

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\* These months commenced from the 22d of September, in the following order:—*Vendémiaire*, *Brumaire*, *Frimaire*, for the autumn; *Nivose*, *Pluviose*, *Ventose*, for the winter; *Germinal*, *Floreale*, *Prarial* for the spring; *Messidor*, *Thermidor*, *Fructidor*, for the summer. The days of the decades were merely distinguished as *Primidi*, *Duodi*, *Tridi*, &c.

sion towards a determined object, in the frightful chaos of this period, pretend that the three parties into which the Mountain was now broken, represented the three different schools of philosophy of the seventeenth century. Robespierre's party were ardent admirers of Rousseau, and their ambition was to put into practice the moral and political ideas of this "instructor of mankind." Danton's party, with its indulgent impiety, its licentious tastes, its intellectual brilliancy, and its love of luxury, represented the school of Voltaire. The Hébertists were the disciples of the *Encyclopédie*.

Among the latter party, which had many adherents in the convention, was a Prussian baron, Anacharsis Clootz, who, calling himself the orator of the human race, had played a prominent part in the ridiculous scenes at the commencement of the revolution, in which the enthusiasm for liberty and fraternity had been expressed. This Anacharsis Clootz, who had progressed from fool to madman, and from madman to criminal, as almost all men who played an active part in the drama enacting in France, now took, together with Hébert, the initiative in the anti-religion question, which is represented as a *coup d'état*, calculated to place the commune, to which they belonged, at the head of the revolution.\* At the instigation of these two men, Gobel, bishop of Paris, with eleven of his vicars, presented himself before the convention, to renounce his functions as Minister of the Catholic Church; "because," said he, "in future we ought to recognise no other public and national worship, but that of liberty and equality," (7th November, 1793.)

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\* I cannot see in such measures as these, and many others of these times, any thing but the freaks of the morbid imaginations of madmen, not the acting out of great projects, as the French historians would make us believe. The French Revolution is the history of the human intellect having cast off its allegiance to God, and with that allegiance having lost all comprehension of virtue and its attendants, order and true liberty.

The convention applauded those who had, as they expressed it, "raised themselves to the height where the revolution and philosophy awaited them." It was decreed, that thenceforward the worship of Reason should be the only national religion.

The metropolitan church was in consequence converted into *the Temple of Reason*, and a festival was there celebrated, in which this new goddess was throned in the place where before rose the altar of Christ. All the sections took part in this hideous ceremony, and the procession which followed the figure of Reason, represented under the form of a woman, and dragged along in an antique chariot, moved towards the convention, which received it with applause, and joined it. During a whole fortnight after this, the commune was engaged in works of piety, according to its new creed. It had the statues of the saints thrown down, and all relics burnt; it decreed the demolition of all church steeples, "because it was contrary to the principles of equality that they should rise above all other edifices."\* It farther decreed that all churches should be closed, and arranged processions of *sansculottes*, who paraded before the convention covered with the sacerdotal ornaments, parodied the ceremonies of the church, danced the *carmagnole*,† and bore in triumph the bust of Marat, the saint of the new creed. From all sides arrived at the same time the abjurations of the Catholic priests, who declared themselves to have been, while in the service of the religion of Christ, charlatans and impostors. But let us hope that many of these abjurations were forged, or we may cease to feel any pity for the sufferings of a class, numbers of whose members had sunk into such depths of iniquity.

The fearful lengths to which things were now carried,

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\* Lavallée.

† A dance invented by the *sansculottes*.

could not but disgust and alarm those who had any feeling left, and even Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and their adherents, the very men who had fed the democratic passions, which were now working their worst, were horrified by the excesses they committed. After the fall of the Girondins, Danton, who was indolent except in moments of extreme excitement, had withdrawn in disgust, and even sorrow, to Aras-sur-Aube, his birth-place, to try and forget, in the society of his young wife, the dreadful scenes that were dishonoring his country. His absence had been used by his adversaries, to render him unpopular, by spreading reports of his riches gained by illegitimate means; yet when he returned, and together with Camille Desmoulins, in the paper *Le Vieux Cordelier*, which they established for the purpose, preached moderation, and held up to universal execration Hébert and his infamous associates, and condemned the sanguinary laws of the committee, the popular sympathy with their opinions was shown by the great sale of their new paper. There were too many sufferers in France, that the slightest shade of a return to common humanity should not be hailed with enthusiasm. Whether or not these men had their personal motives for wishing to put an end to the present state of things, as their adversaries had for wishing it to continue, one is tempted to forget their former deeds, and to bless them for having pronounced, in the midst of the most frightful corruption, some words that did not dishonor humanity, and to have shed a ray of hope, though only transient, into the hearts of despairing multitudes.

The time had come, when "the Revolution, like Saturn, was to devour its own children," and the struggles between the three parties bear exactly the same character as all the struggles of the different factions through-

out the Revolution, with the sole difference, that in this instance the party in power (*i. e.*, Robespierre and the committee) immolated the other two, before they were too powerful to be overcome. But the same accusations as ever were afloat. The foreign powers, but particularly the minister of England, was said to be the instigator of every conspiracy, real or pretended. It was he who incited the Hébertists to throw odium upon the Revolution by their abominable excesses, and it was he, on the other hand, who inspired the Dantonists with their more moderate views. Robespierre, who presided almost as judge in the Jacobin Club, the chief arena of the struggles between the two parties, particularly insisted upon throwing this odium of foreign interference upon the excesses of the Hébertists, in order to be able the more energetically to attack the new religion which they had introduced, and of which he, from policy as well as from conviction, highly disapproved. It was obnoxious to him, because its introduction was a victory gained by the commune over the committee, because he was afraid that the Revolution should appear atheistical, and because, as he expressed himself, "*Atheism is aristocratical.*" The idea of a Great Being, who watches over oppressed innocence, and who punishes triumphant crime, is quite popular. The people, those that are unhappy, applaud me; if there be any who blame me for deprecating atheism, it is the rich and the guilty."

In the same speech, however, he allowed, that though a legislator would be a madman, were he to adopt a system of atheism, and though he was of opinion, "that if God did not exist, He ought to be invented," he also maintained that those would be madmen who should consider it a crime in any individual to adopt whatever opinion he thought proper upon the subject. In consequence



of the opinions held by Robespierre and the committee, backed by the Jacobins, who were their steadfast supporters, it was decreed that all religions, as well as the worship of Reason, were to be tolerated, and the Hébertists, losing their footing in the club, sought to get up agitations among the people, by taking advantage of the dreadful scarcity which continued to prevail. But their attempts at insurrection failed, and only provided new weapons against themselves. Their fall was rendered comparatively easy. On the 13th March, 1794, St. Just demanded of the convention that they should be summoned to the bar; and again treating of their conduct, as if it were adopted upon the instigation of the enemies of the Revolution, declared that it was "high time to immolate on the tomb of the tyrant, all those who regret tyranny, and that justice and probity should be the order of the day." The convention, upon this, declared as traitors to the country, whoever had favored in the republic the plan of corrupting the citizens, of subverting the government, and of subduing the spirit of the public; whoever should excite uneasiness with regard to provisions; whoever should afford a place of refuge to an emigrant, or attempt to change the form of government. Those accused of conspiracy were declared outlawed, and punishment of death was decreed against those who should shelter an outlaw. Hébert, Ronsin, Vincent, Cloutz, several chiefs of the revolutionary army, who had joined in their insurrections, and distinguished themselves by their atrocities, and a few strangers, who scarcely knew the Hébertists, but shared in their fate, in order to give a semblance of truth to the pretence of foreign intrigues, were condemned to death, and executed on the 24th March. The populace was not sated with the oft-repeated spectacle of the guillotine, and assem-

bled in as great numbers to see the death-struggle of these men, who for a long time had enjoyed the title of patriots, as they had done at all the preceding executions. Hébert met with no sympathy from the degraded mob, to whose degradation he had so greatly contributed; and, in their inhumanity to himself, saw the fruits of the vile lessons he had given them. This man, who had not trembled when committing deeds of the most atrocious cruelty and injustice, was so weak in face of death, that he fell from one swoon into another on his way to the guillotine.

The fall of this party occasioned the greatest sensation in France. It was the first time for five years that the government had been stronger than those who conspired against it—that the Revolution, as it were, had stopped; and all parties hailed it with hope, all believed that a change of policy was to ensue. The royalists in the departments began to hold up their heads, the sufferers in the prisons thought already that they breathed the air of freedom, and the Dantonists believed themselves victorious, for, in the persons of Hébert and his associates, the committee had condemned the excesses against which they had raised their voice. But all were mistaken. The Hébertists had fallen, because their fall was deemed necessary by Robespierre and his party, and the Dantonists were to succumb to the same necessity. Their fall was to prove that the committee was still inflexible, and that it tolerated those only who went entirely with it. All divergence, from whatever side, was to be punished. Robespierre had indeed repeatedly raised his voice to defend Danton and Desmoulins, when they were attacked by the Hébertists, but his vanity could not brook the repeated and severe animadversions on the conduct of the committee, contained in *Le Vieux*

*Cordelier*, and still less Camille Desmoulins' retort, when, with hypocritical moderation, he proposed in the Jacobin club, where Camille was called to an account for his expressions, to forgive the author, and only to burn his writings. "To burn them is not to refute them!" exclaimed Desmoulins, inconsiderately, and he was doomed. Six days after the execution of the Hébertists, the Dantonists were arrested. The convention was stupified, but Robespierre and St. Just gave it clearly to be understood that nothing was to be done but to follow their orders; the members tremblingly complied, and unanimously voted the decree of accusation against the deputies Danton, Desmoulins, Bazire, Philippeaux, and Lacroix, besides a number of others belonging to the same party. The accusations were of course always drawn up so as to represent the accused as traitors and conspirators, but Danton, who had so often launched these accusations against others, did not himself submit tamely to such a procedure. Before his arrest he had been so sure of his own popularity, that he had rejected every proposal of timely flight, and now that he was brought before the tribunal, where none as yet had been acquitted, he expressed his indignation with such violence, calling upon his accusers to come and meet him face to face, that St. Just and Billaud Varennes ordered the public accuser, Fouquier Tinville, not to reply to these demands, but to get through the three days allowed for the pleading of the accused as he best could, by delays and other subterfuges, and then to close the debates. However, the people began to manifest some sympathy with the man who had so often commanded them, and the committee having obtained some vague information of words spoken by General Dillon, who was imprisoned in the Luxembourg, which

seemed to imply that a plot was on foot among the prisoners for making an effort to free themselves ; St. Just, taking advantage of this rumor, went to the convention to report that the prisoners were in open revolt against the tribunal, and that a conspiracy was ready to break out both within and without the prison walls. The convention, the humble slave of the committee, did as they desired, and authorized the tribunal to stop the pleading of the prisoners, and to decide immediately upon their fate. Armed with this decree, Fouquier pronounced without delay the sentence of death, and the accused, fifteen in number, were conducted to the scaffold on the 5th of April, 1794. A few days after, they were followed by the rest of the two parties, condemned on the pretext of the conspiracy of the prisoners, among whom were Chaumette, Gobel, and the widows of Hébert and Desmoulins.

The last resistance was overcome ; no voice was any longer raised against the reign of terror ; from all parts of France came felicitations to the committee, which reigned without a rival, and with more unlimited power than was possessed by any monarch that ever ruled. While the struggles were going on with the Hébertists and the Dantonists, the committee, desiring still farther to concentrate all power in the state, made the convention pass a decree, which may be considered as the final settlement of the revolutionary government, (4th December, 1793.) All established administrative bodies, and all public functionaries without exception, were placed under the immediate direction of the committee of public safety. The application of the *revolutionary laws* was confided to the revolutionary committees, which were to correspond directly with the committees of public safety (*salut public*) and of general safety, (*sureté*

*générale*.) The *procureur syndics* of the departments and of the communes were replaced by *national agents*, who were chosen by the government, not by the localities, and the representatives sent on divers missions, who had hitherto exercised almost discretionary powers, were forbid, as well as the local authorities, to extend or to limit any decrees, or to levy troops or money, &c. Besides this, the *Bulletin des Lois* was created, an arrangement for ensuring the promulgation of the laws issued, for which there had not until then been any distinct regulations.

In the report which Robespierre had made concerning these measures, and which was at the same time a manifesto against the two refractory parties, he defined the policy which he and his colleagues intended to follow. "The first maxim of our policy," he said, "must be, that the people must be governed by reason, and the enemies of the people by terror. Though virtue is the prime mover of a popular government in times of peace, during a revolution it must be moved by two springs, virtue and terror. Terror means nothing more than prompt, severe, and inflexible justice; and is thus an emanation of virtue. To punish the oppressors of humanity is clemency; to pardon them is barbarity."

True to their word, the committee acted upon the principle that terror is a virtue, and terror continued to be the order of the day, and new rivers of blood were added to those that had already flowed; for notwithstanding the success which had attended the French arms since the commencement of the year 1794, there were yet innumerable difficulties in the interior, and all difficulties were to be drowned in blood.

France had indeed made unequalled efforts. The levy *en masse* had by this time added twelve hundred

thousand men to the armies ; the gun manufactories had produced one million of fire-arms ; the cannon foundries were able to deliver seven thousand cannons a year ; and twelve millions of pounds of saltpetre had been extracted from the soil ; and the navy, completely ruined by the emigration, had been recruited by tyrannous means. But the inexperienced peasants who were thus pressed into the service could not stand the attacks of the first navy in the world, and England was constantly victorious at sea, while the allied armies were beaten on all sides. No enemy any longer trod the soil of France ; the French had again entered Belgium, and the armies of the Alps and the Pyrenees had, by a series of brilliant victories, opened to them Italy and Spain.

In the interior all kinds of suffering continued to increase. The assignats were more and more depreciated, and with fourteen different armies to maintain, the necessity for issuing new ones continued to be the same ; the number of those already in circulation amounted to four or five milliards of francs. The requisites for the armies had been levied in so tyrannical and confused a manner, that all merchandise of the first necessity had almost disappeared from the market, and production had nearly ceased. No other industry and commerce existed in the country, but what was required to provide for the armies and for the daily subsistence of the people. The *maximum*, though continued, was of course not sufficient to counterbalance the evils of the existing scarcity, and notwithstanding the minute and multifarious measures for ensuring the working of this law, it was eluded by the buyers and sellers, who had two kinds of merchandise, the one good, which they sold to those who were willing to pay above the *maximum*, and the other bad, which was sold to the people for the fixed price

In consequence of the arrival of a supply from America, and of a very good harvest, the quantity of corn was considered sufficient for the year, yet the committee had taken very vigorous measures to prevent confusion. The commission of subsistence was ordered to verify the state of the crops, and to see that sufficient corn was immediately threshed to meet the demands in the market. It had been feared that the reapers would exact too high wages, and the committee had in consequence declared that all persons accustomed to this kind of work were in *forced requisition*, (*réquisition forcée*,) and that the amount of their wages should be fixed by the local authorities. Afterwards, when the journeymen butchers and bakers had mutinied, the same law was extended to all workmen in the state, employed in the production, the transport, or the sale of the first necessities. The provisioning with meat caused the greatest anxiety. This article was particularly scarce in Paris, and from the time that the Hébertists had availed themselves of its scarcity to get up riots, the evil had continued to increase. The same regulations which had been made for the consumption of bread, were obliged to be adopted for meat also. The inhabitants of Paris were put upon rations of meat, as before of bread. The number of cattle, sheep, and swine, allowed for the consumption of every day, was fixed by the commission, which distributed them to the butchers named by every section, according to the number of persons for whom they had to provide. Every butcher was to deliver, every fifth day, half a pound of meat per head to each family who applied to him with cards signed by the revolutionary committees, and bearing the number of members of which the family consisted.

The same extraordinary measures were soon found

necessary for wood and coal also, and proving inefficacious, every day gave rise to new oppressive enactments, and to a state of suffering which is perhaps unequalled in the annals of the world. Anarchy, however, had ceased to reign, for the committee, now sufficiently powerful, bent all other wills to its own. The different ministerial departments were suppressed, and replaced by twelve commissions, which were in fact but the offices of the committee. The revolutionary army, which had ceased to be necessary, as no resistance was any longer attempted against the decrees of the committee, and which had proved, by the part it had taken in the plots of the Hébertists, that it was likely to become a nuisance to its own masters, was dissolved. The revolutionary committees in the communes, with the exception of those at Paris, were suppressed, as it was found that the police would be more active, if its functions were intrusted to fewer hands. All the clubs, except the Jacobins, being also found very detrimental, now that the object was to prevent discussion, not to encourage it, were accused of being composed of enemies of the revolution, and suppressed.

The Jacobins then became more than ever the regulators of opinions: but the general censorship which they had hitherto exercised having become rather annoying, as it happened sometimes that they denounced those whom it was not convenient to punish, it was determined that, in future, denunciations should be transmitted secretly to the committee of public safety, by a committee of its members instituted for the purpose. Finally, a decree was passed, according to which all the ex-nobles of France, and all foreigners, were bound to leave the country within ten days, under penalty of death. And meanwhile the guillotine continued re-



rentlessly the extermination of those called the enemies of the republic. At Nantes, Carrier continued his sanguinary occupation; at Orange a new revolutionary tribunal was erected, which on internal evidence alone, or what they chose to call such, judged the suspected of the south. The deputy Maignet, who presided in this tribunal, destroyed, together with all its inhabitants, the little town of Bedouin, which was suspected of an intention to revolt. At Arras, Joseph Lebon imitated and surpassed all the atrocities of Carrier; and at Paris, the tribunal condemned whole *batches*, as they were termed, of individuals, without even going to the trouble of putting questions to them. Hypocrisy of forms, which had hitherto been kept up, was now laid aside, but hypocrisy of expression was still maintained, and Robespierre and St. Just overflowed with speeches, in which the words justice, morality, and virtue, were continually repeated. "We have opposed the sword to the sword," said St. Just, "and the republic is founded." . . . . "Honesty, justice, and all the virtues, are the order of the day," proclaimed Robespierre, and nothing was now left for those who had *decreed* morality, but to do the same for religion. The triumvirate, Robespierre, St. Just, and Couthon, having now ensured their reign, according to the natural order of things, the destroyers next thought of reconstructing. They are said to have given themselves up to fond imaginations of instructing, purifying, and moralizing the multitude, and they maintained that whatever is done for the people, or spoken for the people, all is virtue and truth; there can be no error, no excess, no crime. "The suffering classes," said Robespierre, "are the powerful of the earth, they have a right to speak as masters to the governments that neglect them. We will have an order of things in

which all low and evil passions shall be restrained, all benevolent and generous passions awakened by the laws, in which the common fatherland shall ensure the well-being of every individual, and in which every individual shall take part in the prosperity of his country."

Now that power was concentrated, the hatred of those who were oppressed by it, and the envy of those who wished to share in it, also began to find objects on which to fix. The committee of general safety had instituted a police, which, besides the open violence which it employed, had its secret agents in every assembly, in every public place, and in every private house; and which, preventing by fear every outburst of feeling, only rendered it the more intense. The desire of ridding the country of the monsters, who were every day sacrificing hundreds of their fellow-citizens, began to rise; and though a corrupt people lay crouching at the feet of the vile tyrants, who, by flattering its passions, had enslaved it, one individual raised his arm to strike what he thought a virtuous blow. A man called Ladmiral, had long hesitated whom to destroy, Robespierre or Collot d'Herbois; he at length decided upon the latter, but failed, and his failure contributed still farther to strengthen the power of those he had threatened. The most extraordinary sympathy was shown for the members of the committee thus menaced, and was even pushed so far, as to offer the committee the insignia of sovereign power. This offer was, however, rejected in most magniloquent speeches, by those who knew that they had every thing to lose by it, and nothing to gain. Robespierre particularly, who felt the danger with which he was threatened by the growing importance attached to his person, most warmly repelled honors which should raise him above his fellow-citizens. He knew that the power he

enjoyed he owed to the support of his party, and his own mean and envious heart taught him, that to rise too high above this party, would be to convert friends into foes. This had indeed already in a great measure taken place, for it had become usual to say, *Robespierre will have it so, The committee will have it so*; and Fouquier Tinville, the chief of the revolutionary tribunal, used his name alone to menace his victims, while the prisoners also singled his name out for execration. Robespierre was also the idol of the women, who spoke of him as of a being above humanity, and whose delicate flatteries and attentions were most pleasing to this strange being. To the rest of Robespierre's adorers, was joined a ridiculous sect, headed by an old woman named Catherine Théot, who called herself the mother of God, and predicted the coming of a new Messiah, and had even indicated Robespierre as this prophet. But notwithstanding the ridicule with which these circumstances covered Robespierre, in the eyes of a people who, even in the midst of the atrocious scenes which were going on, had not lost their taste for wit and satire, they did not fail to give umbrage to his colleagues, who suspected that, notwithstanding his mock humility, he was not altogether guiltless of the homage which was rendered him; and this suspicion was greatly strengthened at the sight of the prominent part he had assigned to himself at the inauguration of the new creed which he and his colleagues had bestowed upon France.

This creed, which was termed the universal religion of nature, was now to be seriously introduced, and the convention had voted fêtes in honor of *liberty, justice, and the human race*, and had decreed, "That the French people recognised the existence of a Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul." (May 7th, 1794.)

The 8th of June was the day appointed for the festival. A few days before, the convention having to elect a president, Robespierre was appointed by his colleagues, who as yet thought it advisable to flatter him. This choice ensured to him the principal rôle in the spectacle of the 8th. The morning rose in all the glory of the season. Robespierre, after having allowed expectation to watch long for his coming, at length appeared in the midst of the convention. It was evident that great attention had been bestowed upon his dress ; his head was decked with feathers, and he, as well as every other member of the convention, carried in his hand a bouquet of flowers, fruits, and ears of corn. His countenance, usually dark and lowering, on this day bore an expression of joy and triumph. The procession moved towards an amphitheatre raised in the middle of the garden of the Tuileries, on which the convention took its seat, surrounded by groups of persons of both sexes, and of all ages. The children were crowned with violets, the youths with myrtle, the men with oak leaves, and the old men with vine and olive wreaths. The matrons held their daughters by the hand, and carried baskets full of flowers. In front of the amphitheatre were placed three figures, representing Atheism, Discord, and Egoism. As soon as the members of the convention were seated, the ceremony was opened by the performance of music ; then the president made a speech, commencing in these words :—" Republican Frenchmen, the fortunate day has at length arrived, which the French people consecrates to the Supreme Being ! Never has the world which He has created offered to Him a spectacle so worthy of Him. He has seen tyranny, crime, and imposture reign upon the earth : at this moment He sees an entire nation, that has been wrestling with all the

oppressors of the human race, suspending its heroic labor, in order to raise its thoughts and its prayers to the Great Being who intrusted it with this mission, and gave courage to fulfil it!" After a few more words, the president, seizing a torch, put fire to the images of Atheism, Discord, and Egoism; and when they were burnt, the statue of Wisdom was seen rising from their ashes. The procession then moved to the Champ de Mars, where the members of the convention seated themselves in the shade of a tree on the summit of a hill, while the other actors in the scene again grouped themselves around it, and, after another symphony had been performed, the young men, on a given signal, drew their swords from the scabbard, and swore to defend their country; the women, taking their children in their arms, raised them towards heaven; and all the spectators followed their example. The day was terminated by public games. Robespierre, intoxicated with the delight of having acted as high-priest on this solemn occasion, was not left to enjoy in peace his dreams of greatness. His colleagues, who had watched him with jealous eyes, and marked the growing pride of his deportment, whispered into his ear—one, *that there were still Brutuses alive*: another, *that the Tarpeian rock was near the capitol*.

The next day the envy which he had excited already began to be manifested in direct attacks. Billaud Varennes and Collot d'Herbois, who trembled at the thought of order being re-established, accused him of making the Revolution retrograde, by introducing anew ideas of a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul. The high-priest of the preceding day could find no better means of proving his innocence than quoting a law which he and Couthon had just been writing, and which

tended to render the revolutionary tribunal still more sanguinary, and more uncontrolled. Every vestige of even the semblance of justice which had hitherto been kept up, was destroyed by this law, which authorized the tribunal to put to death any prisoners "against whom could be produced any kind of proof, either material or moral, verbal or written, which could be approved of by reasonable minds." The only guarantee of the accused was thus in the conscience of the jury, men permanently attached to the tribunal, who can scarcely be supposed to have had a conscience. But this law was so styled as to give to the public accuser, and to the two committees, the right which had hitherto been exclusively enjoyed by the convention, of summoning the enemies of the people to appear before the tribunal; and its members were thus placed at the mercy of their enemies, as all other citizens had long been. Robespierre was too well known to allow a doubt as to this wording of the decree being intentional; and though no voice was raised to protest in the name of humanity against this iniquitous law, the danger to their own persons roused the members of the convention from their degenerate slumbers, and after some days of stormy discussions, the astute plan of Robespierre was baffled by the insertion of a clause, declaring that the convention alone had the right to arrest its own members: all other persons were left at the mercy of this most wicked law. Robespierre, indignant, protested that he entertained no projects against the convention, and as usual enumerated his services, and alluded to the innumerable dangers by which he pretended he was always surrounded; but the struggle which was to end in his fall had begun, and those who had hitherto been the most abject in their submission to the triumvirate, were now the most clamorous against

them. Tallien, Barras, Bourdon, were in the foremost ranks of those who tried to raise a party against him in the convention; and they were joined by the members of the committee of general safety, (*sureté générale*), the friends of Billaud Varennes, and ancient accomplices of Hébert—men who had been used to stand at the foot of the scaffold, and laugh at the work of butchery going on—men who had been used to say, that they would not rest until they had raised a wall of heads between themselves and the people. In spite of Robespierre's resistance, the fanatics who had elected him their prophet were summoned before the revolutionary tribunal, and he himself covered with ridicule. Weeping with rage and wounded vanity, he retired from the committee, and for six weeks took no part in public business; during which time he left in the hands of his colleagues the power of exercising the dictatorship acquired by the law of the 22d Prairial, a power of which they availed themselves in the most atrocious way, while he, being the author of the law, of course bore all the odium of their crimes. Besides, though absent from public life, he did not break off his relations with the infamous chiefs of the tribunal, Dumas, Coffinal, and Fouquier, and thus took a more direct part also in the murders. Blood was shed with more reckless, guilty haste than ever. The prisons were thinning so fast, that Fouquier, with ferocious pleasantry, said that they should soon have to stick up a bill with *house to be let*. Yet even the pretexts under which these murders were at first committed, had ceased to exist. The republic was victorious, its enemies in the interior completely subdued, but *the habit of murder had been contracted*; all respect for human life was gone, and the daily executions had even ceased to cause excitement. The

horrid monster Fouquier Tinville, to bring variety into the monotony of his business, had constructed, in one of the halls of the palace of the Luxembourg converted into a prison, an amphitheatre capable of containing about one hundred and fifty accused, whom he proposed to have all condemned at one sitting; he had had the guillotine put up in the same hall. But the committee of public safety, hearing of this enormity, sent for their atrocious instrument to remonstrate with him, and Collot d'Herbois exclaimed in a transport of passion, "Would you degrade punishment?" (*Veux-tu démoraliser le supplice?*) Fouquier was more moderate in future, but he continued, nevertheless, to exercise his functions to his own satisfaction. "Things go well," said this miscreant, "the heads fall as thick as tiles; however, in the next decade, a greater number must fall: I must have four hundred and fifty at least."\* The most criminal negligence existed in his most iniquitous tribunal. Often the acts of accusation were not given to the accused before the moment that they appeared at the bar. Acts of accusation were prepared in readiness, in which crimes and all particulars were enumerated, and to which the names alone were wanting. It was the same with the judgments. The printing-office was in the adjoining room, and the papers were handed to the printer through a small aperture in the wall. As it has been already stated, the most extraordinary mistakes were made—one person was put to death instead of another; persons long dead, were again upon the lists of the condemned. One man appeared before the tribunal, whose name was not upon the list of accused. He observed this to Fouquier. "Never mind," replied the monster, "give me your name." He did so, and was sent to the

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\* For this and all the other details, see the trial of Fouquier.



guillotine. The list of those who were executed, was every day hawked about under the windows of the prisoners—of those who had perhaps lost the last tie that bound them to earth—in words which proved the degree of brutishness to which the people had sunk. “Here are the names of those who have won in the lottery of the St. Guillotine,” was the usual phrase. But let us turn away from scenes at which the heart sickens.

Such a horrid system could not continue much longer. The frightful indifference which had succeeded to the no less frightful excitement of the people, was destined to cease with the growing struggles between the triumvirs and their assailants; a slight ray of hope only was wanted to dissolve the ice that had settled round all hearts.

During his retirement from the committee, Robespierre did not neglect his stanch friends, the Jacobins, and though apparently inert, his speeches there show that he had neither forgotten the dangers that threatened him, nor the end he had marked out for himself. He spoke of stopping the effusion of human blood which was being shed for crimes; he complained of being rendered odious to the people by calumniators who put upon him all the massacres that were committed, but he nevertheless gathered together all his adherents, and prepared to strike a bold stroke, to have recourse to the scaffold and to the sword in case his eloquence should not suffice to crush his opponents. He appeared again in the convention on the 26th July, (8th Thermidor,) armed with a voluminous speech which he had carefully prepared; but his enemies had been active in his absence, and the assembly was no longer inclined to lend a favorable ear to a defence which consisted mostly in recriminations against its own members. He was listened to in dead silence, a portentous silence to one who

was accustomed to have his voice drowned by applause. When he had finished, the first who ventured to speak, Bourdon, only did so to propose that the speech should be sent to the two committees. At length Cambon exclaimed: "It is time to speak the whole truth; one man has paralyzed the will of the whole convention, and that man is the one who has just spoken—is Robespierre." The ice once broken, a torrent of accusations rushed out against Robespierre, and the members vied with each other in taking the defence of those whom he had accused. Robespierre, disconcerted, withdrew, but though he had been made to feel how little power his words now had, he still relied upon success the next day. His friends the Jacobins, to whom he resorted after his defeat in the convention, more quick to action, declared that an insurrection ought to be got up immediately; but Robespierre was not framed for open and daring crime: he had more than once proved himself physically a coward, and he restrained the impetuosity of his friends, among whom, besides the Jacobins, were the mayor Fleuriot Lescot, who had succeeded Pache, the national agent Payan, who had succeeded Chaumette, and the commandant of the sections, Henriot. Upon the fidelity of the members of the revolutionary tribunal, who were entirely his creatures, he could also depend, as well as upon the men of the Faubourg, who still looked up to him as the genius of the revolution.

It was decided that St. Just, who had been recalled from the army to come to the aid of his friend, should recommence the attack in the convention the next day, and that the commune should hold itself in readiness for an insurrection in case of failure.

In the mean time, Tallien, Bourdon, Barras, Fréron, and the other Mountainists, exerted their utmost endea-

vors to gain the rest of the convention for their cause, and at last succeeded.

On the 9th Thermidor, (27th July, 1794,) St. Just ascended the tribune, but had hardly begun to speak before the storm broke loose. Tallien and Billaud Varennes were the first to interrupt him, and the latter pronounced a number of vague accusations against Robespierre, and ended by saying that the Jacobins had on the preceding day entered into a conspiracy for murdering the convention. At these words Robespierre rushed to the tribune, but from all sides resounded the cry, "Down with the tyrant!" with such violence, that it was impossible for him to make himself heard, and Tallien, brandishing a poniard, cried out: "I witnessed yesterday the sitting of the Jacobins; I saw the army of the new Cromwell forming itself, and I have armed myself with a poniard, that I may pierce his heart, in case the convention has not the courage to issue a decree of accusation against him." The convention then decreed the permanence of its sittings, (a measure always taken in times of danger,) and the arrest of Dumas, Henriot, and other creatures of Robespierre; it was decided that the commune of Paris should be responsible, on its life, for the tranquillity of the capital, and a proclamation was issued to the people. During this time Robespierre made innumerable efforts to gain a hearing, but in vain; his voice was always drowned by the clamors of the assembly, and the bell of the president ringing to order. Tallien recommenced his accusations. "It is false!" cried Robespierre, and he was again interrupted. For one moment he fixed his eyes upon the most ardent members of the Mountain, who had so long been his supporters and coadjutors, but some returned his look coldly, others turned away their heads. Then addressing the

assembly in general, he cried: "It is to you, honest men, that I address myself, not to the brigands." The vociferations were redoubled; in endeavoring to overpower them, his voice failed, and trembling with rage, it was with the greatest effort that he screamed out: "President of assassins, I demand to be heard!" "The blood of Danton chokes him," cried one of the deputies in reply, and in the midst of the most dreadful tumult, the decree for his arrest was passed. The deputy Souchet then declared, that in giving his voice, he thought he was voting for the arrest of the triumvirate; and the convention, willing to assent, included in the decree Couthon and St. Just, who, cool and impassible, had been witnesses of the scene. The younger Robespierre, who had been mostly engaged with the armies, but had latterly been retained in Paris to strengthen his brother's party, asked to share his fate, as well as Lebas. The assembly consented, and the prisoners were distributed in different prisons, and the convention suspended its sitting for two hours.

In the mean while Robespierre's friends were not idle. Immediately on hearing of his arrest, the general council of the commune declared itself in insurrection, and the sections, the Jacobins, and the revolutionary committees were all in movement. Again the tocsin sounded, the barriers were closed, and Paris was in open insurrection. The prisoners were soon released, and carried in triumph to the Hôtel de Ville. But their triumph was merely owing to the two hours rest which the convention had imprudently allowed itself. As soon as it had again assembled, some of the deputies, by their intrepidity, immediately succeeded in turning away the more immediate danger which threatened the assembly, from the cannon which Coffinal had already pointed against

it; the cannoniers having been brought back to obedience, were made to turn their artillery against the Hôtel de Ville, where the assembled insurgents had lost time in deliberating. Henriot was drunk and incapable of leading on the sections, and Robespierre still recoiled before the idea of an insurrection. In the convention there was no hesitation; the Hôtel de Ville was soon surrounded, and Leonard Bourdon entered the hall where the escaped prisoners were assembled, at the head of a few armed men. On seeing that hope was lost, Lebas immediately put an end to his own life by a pistol-shot; Robespierre attempted the same, but did not succeed. His under jaw only was fractured by the ball. The younger Robespierre threw himself from the window, Couthon and St. Just remained fixed to the spot, and Robespierre, bathed in his own blood, was transported in this state to the committee of general safety, where he remained for several hours extended on a table, exposed to the outrages of his former colleagues, who were base enough to strike him, now that he was fallen and helpless, to cover him with invectives, and even to spit in his face? There are moments of most sublime elevation of soul in those who fall innocently and in a good cause; but what must have been the feelings of this unhappy man, while he lay thus helplessly exposed to the brutal insults of those who had been his associates through a long career of crime! If Robespierre is judged by his *words*, he must be pronounced to have been a mistaken but enthusiastic Utopist; if judged by his *acts* in connection with his words, he appears as the greatest monster of hypocrisy the world has ever produced.\* One virtue he possessed,

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\* Napoleon at St. Helena pronounced a kind of apology of Robespierre. It is a question though whether Napoleon is a good authority as to the moral character of a man.

he was honest in money matters ; he did not pilfer ; and the extraordinary renown he gained for this simple virtue, proves, more than any thing else, how low was the state of morality in France at that day. The day after their arrest, the prisoners, together with sixteen members of the commune, suffered their punishment ; and the cries of joy which accompanied them to the scaffold, the great excitement which had succeeded the general apathy which had reigned of late, on such occasions, proved that the people, sated with blood, began to return to humanity, but that its feelings of justice were yet tinged with the ferocity of the times.

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## CHAPTER IX.

Consequences of Robespierre's fall—Reign of Terror over—*La Jeunesse Dorée*—Surpassing frivolity—Attempted suppression of the Jacobins—Measures against the former instruments of Terror—Universal guilt—Destruction of the Jacobin Club—Decrees of the Convention—Misery of the people—Operations of the army—Movements in La Vendée—War of the Chouans—Peace at length established in La Vendée—Advantageous peace with Holland—Peace with Prussia—Negotiations with Spain—Death of the Dauphin—Liberation of the Princess Royal—Peace concluded with all countries except England and Austria—Interior commotions—President's speech—Insurrection—Collot, Billaud, and Barrère ordered to be transported—Arrest of other Mountainists—Decrees of the Convention—Dreadful reaction—Insurrection—Temporary triumph of the mob—Soon forced into submission—Rallying of the Royalists—Treason of Pichegru—Defeat of the Royalists—New Constitution—Dissensions—Total Discomfiture of the Insurgents—Convention confirms the Constitution and dissolves itself—The Directory—A regular Government established.

ROBESPIERRE'S fall was the signal for the cessation of the reign of terror ; yet it was for a short time doubtful whether this would be the case, as many of those who had caused his fall had done so more from a fear of his power than from disapprobation of his system. But the people in general considered his death the end of the

atrocious tyranny which had so long weighed upon them, and so energetically expressed this view, that the convention was obliged to act up to it ; and the reaction was so great that in a short time the whole revolutionary government was almost entirely destroyed. The extreme concentration of power was followed by as great a dissemination. The divers affairs of the state were divided among sixteen committees, entirely independent of each other, and without a central point of union. The committee of public safety, formerly so powerful, was re-composed, and had no other functions assigned to it than the direction of military and diplomatic affairs. The law of 22d Prairial was abolished ; the number and power of the revolutionary committees were reduced ; the commune of Paris was dissolved, and the administration of this city was intrusted to two commissions of police and of finance, named by the convention, and controlled by the committees ; the sections were forbid to assemble more than once in every decade, and the citizens who attended were no more paid. This was a most important step for putting a stop to popular excitement, and sending back to their work those who had been led by the factions to abandon their peaceful employments. The convention, besides, modified the law of the maximum, and limited the forced contributions ; sent into the departments commissaries to purify the administrative bodies, to restrain the terrorists, and to deliver the suspected. The representatives who were devastating La Vendée were recalled, and an amnesty offered to the insurgents. A commission was named to inquire into the state of the prisons in Paris, who executed their task with so much clemency, that these receptacles of human misery were soon entirely vacated.

Sincere and heartfelt thanks rose from the land of

France to the throne of the Almighty ; but a country so long agitated by innumerable factions had still many awful scenes to go through. Revenge was preparing to take the place of systematic murder. Girondins, Feuillans, and royalists began to raise their heads and call for vengeance. The press having escaped from the thralldom in which it had been held by fear more than by actual laws, excited the young men of Paris to revenge upon the murderers the sufferings of the murdered. The appeal was replied to by the corrupted youths of the times who had escaped from being pressed into the service of the armies, or had deserted that service, and who spent their lives in idle pleasures and degrading debauches, sighing for another state of things, not from any elevated motives, but from a desire of extending the pleasures of their existence. These young men, who, in the language of the times, were denominated *muscadins*, or *la jeunesse dorée*, (the gilded youth,) had adopted an absurd costume which they called *à la victime*, and armed with large sticks, used to repair to the Palais Royal and to the theatres to do battle with the Jacobins, and all the other agents of the reign of terror with whom they could meet ; and then returned to sport their laurels in the salons, which were beginning to be again opened, and where the ladies of Paris, not rendered serious even by the frightful scenes from which they had just escaped, exercised their imaginations and showed their sensibility by inventing names for the new fashions that appeared. There were caps *à l'humanité*, corsets *à la justice*, curtisies *à la victime*, and balls denominated *des victimes*, at which only those were admitted whose relatives had perished on the scaffold. Yet these women, in all their frivolity, were not heartless, for Madame Beauharnais\*

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\* Afterwards married to Napoleon Bonaparte, and Empress of the French.



and Madame Tallien\* were among them ; but a kind of moral intoxication had taken possession of society, relieved from the oppression which had weighed upon it.

The party who had adhered to Robespierre, as long as his ambition did not threaten to number them among his victims, and who, in overthrowing him, had not meant to destroy his system, soon began to murmur against the reaction, and to denounce it as dangerous to the country. These men had been excluded from all the government departments, and, hated and distrusted in the convention as accomplices of the tyrant, they had now but one means of power left them, and that was the Jacobin Club. This club, which had long been the centre of power, and the support of the ruling men, now changed its character, and became the centre of opposition to the government. Its destruction was in consequence determined by the Thermidorian party, and the work was commenced by a decree of the convention, forbidding all affiliations and confederations, as well as all correspondence between popular societies under a collective name ; even forbidding petitions to be presented under a collective name, and ordering them to be signed by all the individuals interested in them. These measures, which were in fact the annihilation of all the powers who had made the revolution, were most violently combated by those in whose minds these powers were intimately connected with the idea of liberty ; while the majority of the nation, disgusted with anarchy, and longing for peace and

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and one who used her high position to relieve as much suffering as she could.

\* Madame Tallien was first married to an ancient president of the parliament of Bordeaux ; she was arrested in 1793 as suspected, and released by Tallien, over whom, by her beauty and her talents, she exercised a most beneficial influence, and won him back to humanity. She was again imprisoned by Robespierre, and then excited Tallien to overthrow the tyrant.

tranquillity, hailed them with delight, and the reaction gained new force. The convention, as if anxious to make amends for the time in which it had, by its abject submission, allowed itself to be the instrument of the most cruel despotism and persecution, now, in accordance with the public desire, began to take prompt measures against the worst instruments of the reign of terror. Fouquier Tinville, Joseph Lebon, and David, were arrested. It was determined that the conduct of Billaud Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and Barrère, should be examined into; and that the revolutionary tribunal of Nantes, together with its atrocious director, Carrier, should be judged by the tribunals.

Carrier's trial produced the greatest sensation, and in the most frightful manner brought home to every mind, how implicated the whole nation was in the guilt of this and other conspicuous monsters of the times; for the commissioners, the more immediate executors of the crimes, could throw their responsibility on the committees, the committees on the convention, and the convention on the people. "Every one is guilty," pleaded Carrier, in his own defence, "every one is guilty, even to the president's bell." Nevertheless he was condemned to death, (25th December, 1794,) with two of his accomplices, and never did the executioner's axe rid the world of a greater monster.

The Mountainists regarded his death as the commencement of reprisals against those men who, according to them, had saved France; and the Jacobins in particular made violent demonstrations, which led to their entire destruction. The *Jeunesse dorée*, who had long persecuted them, now besieged them in their own club-house, assailing them with large stones and sticks, and a most violent battle ensued, in which the women, who always

owed the galleries of the assembly room of the Jacobins, and were denominated by their adversaries *furies de guillotine*, again took a prominent part. The authorities at last interfered, and the club of the Jacobins was closed, (24th January, 1795.)

Addresses pouring in from all sides, from the capital as well as from the departments, proved to the convention the popularity of this measure, and seventy-three of its proscribed members were now recalled, and gave new strength to the party of the reaction, which now proclaimed liberty to all religious creeds, declaring at the same time that "it would not salary any," and prohibiting all external signs of worship. The convention also re-established the free circulation of specie, and entirely abolished the *maximum* and the forced contributions. It further passed decrees with a view to reawaken the love of labor, to forward public instruction, and to encourage the cultivation of the arts and sciences; it established manufactures, projected new canals and new roads, and favored agriculture.

In the mean while the army, far from participating in the feelings of the people at Robespierre's fall, was concerned at the reaction to which it had given rise, and seeing the weakness which ensued from the renewed struggles of the factions in the interior, prepared to make amends for this weakness, by rendering the Revolution more imposing and formidable without. Though destitute of all the *matériel* of an army, the French soldiers, strong in their military spirit, and their love of glory, pushed forward on all sides. In November, 1794, the French forces occupied the banks of the Rhine, from Bâle to the sea, and in January, 1795, they had revolutionized Holland, and taken possession of that country, which was conquered almost without a blow. The joy

excited in France by this event was beyond description, and Pichegru, who commanded the army which had achieved it, was looked upon as the greatest general of the Revolution.

The armies of the south were also very successful. The army of Italy, indeed, alarmed at the fall of Robespierre, stopped in its march on Turin, and retired in disorder to the Col de Tende ; but when attacked by the allies it rallied, beat them at Carcaro, and ensured its position by the taking of Vado. The rest of the campaign was spent in insignificant skirmishes ; but in the eastern Pyrenees the French advanced as far as Feguieras, and took possession of this important place on the 27th November, while in the western Pyrenees they occupied Fontarabia, St. Sebastian, and Tolosa, and advanced upon Pampeluna. Winter, however, approached before this place could be taken, and the army entered winter cantonments at Tolosa and St. Sebastian. The brilliant campaign of 1794 had placed France in possession of Belgium, Holland, the left banks of the Rhine, and a part of Piedmont, of Catalonia, and of Navarre. In the interior, the armies of the republic were as successful. La Vendée was no more the theatre of great operations ; the peasants, though continuing to detest the Revolution, were desirous of repose, and those that remained in the field were only unprincipled adventurers intent upon pillage. Of the illustrious chiefs of the Vendéans, Charette and Stofflet only survived, and being inimical to each other, instead of concerting their movements together they divided the insurgent country between them. At first, General Thureau had been sent against them ; he surrounded their territory with intrenched camps, whence he directed into the interior his *infernal* columns, so called because they destroyed without mercy whatever

they met on their way. Charette and Stofflet, however, nothing daunted, with their little bands of determined men, harassed, beat, and at last almost entirely routed these columns. After the fall of Robespierre, Thureau was recalled, together with the representatives who had authorized his barbarities; and conciliation, not extermination, being now the order of the day, the command was given to Canclaux.

The remnants of the Vendean army, which had sought refuge in Brittany, carried on in that province still more fearful struggles than those in La Vendée, and, known under the name of *Chouannerie*, were more like the war of banditti than of regular soldiers. General Hoche, who was sent against them, taught his soldiers to be pacificators rather than destroyers, and made them respect the customs and particularly the religion of the inhabitants. The chiefs, indignant at the neglect of the Bourbons and the foreign powers, were doubly disposed to peace when the spirit of the government changed after the 9th Thermidor; as soon, therefore, as the convention offered an amnesty, negotiations were opened. Charette was the first to conclude peace, (15th February, 1795.) He obtained for his country liberty of religious worship, an indemnity of two millions of francs, the promise that the habitations destroyed by fire should be rebuilt, and the permission to form a territorial guard of two thousand men, to be paid by the state. The *Chouans* were more difficult to treat with, but Hoche exhibited the greatest talent in this ungrateful task, and while Puisaye was absent in England, his aid-de-camp Cornatin concluded a peace similar to that of Charette. Stofflet was the last to submit.

The cessation of the reign of terror, the conquest of Holland, and the pacification of La Vendée, rendered

the Revolution so formidable in the eyes of the coalition, that many of its members sought to abandon it. The Grand Duke of Tuscany was the first to treat with France, (9th February, 1795.) The United Provinces next sought and obtained peace, and a declaration of their independence, (16th May,) but on very hard conditions: they ceded to France, Northern Flanders, Venloo, Maëstricht, the right of placing garrisons in Grave, Bois-le-duc, (Herzogenbusch,) Berg-op-Zoom, and Flessingen, and the free navigation of their rivers; they paid besides one hundred millions of florins for the expenses of the war, and formed with France an offensive alliance against England, placing at her disposal thirty ships of war, and twenty-five thousand men. The King of Prussia, seeing Mayence invested, his provinces of Cleves and Juliers (Julich) conquered, and the Stadtholder dispossessed, also demanded to treat with France. The committee of public safety immediately declared the cession of the left bank of the Rhine, the first condition of peace. On the 5th of April it was concluded on this basis; but the Republic promised in return, to obtain for the King of Prussia, at the period of general peace, indemnities for the war, and engaged to respect the neutrality of the German states allied to him.

The coalition, indignant at this peace, was still more alarmed on seeing a member of the house of Bourbon enter into negotiations with the Republic: the King of Spain, seeing his funds exhausted, and the route to his capital almost laid open to the French, commenced negotiations, which were not, however, concluded before the 14th of July, because Charles IV. was anxious first to obtain the liberty of the two children of Louis XVI., who were still languishing in prison. The Dauphin, however, whom the royalists called Louis XVII., died

before his liberation could be obtained. This unhappy child perished from the effects of the horrid treatment he had received from the cruel guardian whom the convention had appointed to watch over him, at the time that he was separated from his mother. He lay in a bed that had not been made for more than six months, and he had not strength to do it for himself. His person, as well as his bed and linen, which had not been changed for more than a year, were covered with vermin, and the air of his chamber, which was never cleaned or opened during all that time, was stifling and poisonous. The only luxury allowed him was a pitcher of water ; but the poor babe, subdued by bad treatment, had no longer the spirit to wash himself ; besides, illness began to deprive him of all strength. He asked for nothing, so much did he dread Simon and his other keepers. He was allowed no lights, and spent his days without any kind of occupation. This situation affected his mental as well as his physical state, and it is not wonderful that he fell into a frightful decay. After the 9th Thermidor, a ray of the humanity which again awakened in France, fell into the prison of this hapless child, and the last months of his miserable existence were soothed by the voice of kindness and sympathy. His cruel guardian had been superseded by men of more humane feelings ; but it was too late to save the life of the frail being on whom had been accumulated a weight of misery almost inconceivable. He died on the 8th of June, 1795, aged ten years and two months. His sister, Madame Royale, was also left in perfect solitude after the death of her aunt, the Princess Elizabeth, and was subjected to every kind of privation and humiliation ; but she was of an age to help herself, and was allowed some books and work, so that her life was one of happiness

compared to that of her unhappy brother. She was liberated on the 19th of December, 1795, and delivered over to Austria in exchange for some French prisoners.

The example of Prussia and Spain was followed by a number of smaller states: Saxony, Hanover, Hesse, Portugal, Naples, the Duchy of Parma, and the Pope, all entered into negotiations with France, and the war was now reduced to the ordinary proportions of a war against England and Austria.

France was, however, still in a most dangerous position, for the struggles between the factions in the interior continued in all their violence, and the royalists now began to conceive the hope of conquering their enemies through the means of their faults, and spared no efforts to excite their passions against each other. The outlawed Girondins had been recalled, and now dominated in the convention, where they took the lead in the counter-revolutionary action. Billaud, Collot, and Barrère were under arrest, and famine still reigned throughout the country, but particularly in the capital, where the rations were reduced to three ounces of bread and four ounces of meat *per diem*. The Mountainists and the Jacobins, who, though dispersed, were still in full activity, took advantage of the misery of the people to lead them into new riots, in order to strengthen their own party. Their threats and demonstrations became so alarming, that Sièyes, who had regained his voice since the cessation of the reign of terror, and who had become a member of the committee of public safety, proposed the establishment of a martial law, under the name of "the law of the grand police;" in order that the convention might be protected from renewed violence. This law, which was of the most vigorous character, was directed against all assemblies, in which it



should be proposed to attack public or private property, to re-establish royalty, to subvert the Republic, or to show any hostility against the convention. It was received with applause by all the committees, and it was determined that Sièyes should, as soon as possible, present it to the convention. The day on which the presentation took place, 1st Germinal, (21st March,) the Jacobins had excited the people also to make a demonstration, which was more difficult to obtain, now that there were no conspicuous chiefs among them. A petition was presented, indicating that the people were tired of political dissensions, and begging the convention to stop persecuting the patriots, and immediately to put in force the Constitution of '93 ; a measure which they thought would, by causing the dissolution of the convention, at once open again all offices of power to their party. And one of the deputies demanded that the declaration of rights should, in accordance with one of the articles of that constitution, be hung up in the hall of the convention. The convention, not at all willing to put in force this constitution, was somewhat embarrassed, until Tallien courageously proclaimed its impracticability, and declared that it was necessary to submit it to a revision. The speeches pronounced on this occasion, and particularly that by the President Thibaudeau, show the change of opinion which had taken place.

“A democratic constitution,” said he, “is not one in which the people itself exercises all power. It is one in which a wise distribution of power ensures to the people liberty, equality, and tranquillity. But I do not see that this can be the case in a constitution, where, at the side of a national representation, is placed a usurping commune, or factious Jacobins, which does not allow the national representatives the direction of the armed

force in the town where they hold their sittings, thus depriving them of the power of defending themselves, and of maintaining their dignity ; which grants to a fraction of the people the right of partial insurrection, and the faculty of throwing the state into disorder."

The petition of the people was not only rejected, but the law proposed by Sièyes was passed, and the mob assembled outside of the convention, having first failed to intimidate the representatives, was next dispersed by the *Muscadins*.

On the 12th Germinal, the day of the trial of Collot, Billaud, and Barrère, the struggle was renewed. An immense crowd invaded the Tuileries, thronged into the hall of the convention with frightful tumult, crying for bread, and for the Constitution of '93, and preventing by its clamors even its own spokesmen from being heard. The sections adhering to the Thermidorian principles were directed against them by the committees, and succeeded in driving them from the convention, and finally dispersing them.

This proposed diversion in their favor had only hastened the fall of the prisoners. It was decreed that Collot d'Herbois, Billaud Varennes, and Barrère, with Vadier, who was added to their number, should be transported that very night. Seven other deputies who had spoken in the debate were arrested ; and martial law was proclaimed in Paris. The following day nine more Mountainists were arrested, and the convention decreed that all individuals who had contributed to "the vast tyranny abolished on the 9th Thermidor," should be disarmed ; that the National Guard should be reorganized on the basis of '89 ; that all families, whose property had been confiscated for any other cause than emigration, should be reinstated in their rights ; that religious worship should

be performed in the edifices destined for that purpose ; that the revolutionary tribunals should be definitely suppressed ; and lastly, that a commission of eleven members, all Girondins, should occupy itself with the framing of a new constitution.

This last blow was most severely felt by the Jacobins, and to all their other accusations against the convention, they now added that of apostacy. But as the hopes of the Jacobins declined, those of the royalists rose ; the 12th Germinal was a day of triumph to them, and their audacity daily increased. The emigrants began to re-enter their country under false passports ; others assembled in Switzerland, announcing their speedy return, and the refractory priests again appeared in the provinces, stirring them up to action. The persecution of those who were reputed terrorists now began. The administrative bodies, which were mostly composed of Girondins and royalists, took advantage of the decrees of the convention, to disarm, persecute, and imprison all those who were obnoxious to them. In the south, innumerable assassinations took place, and associations were formed, known under the names of the Companies of Jehu and of the Sun, which made it their business to murder the so-called patriots wherever they met them, even in their own houses. At Lyons the prisons were broken open, and ninety-eight prisoners massacred, and thrown into the Rhone. In a word, the most horrid scenes of the Revolution were equalled, if not surpassed, during the persecution against the revolutionists. At the head of the bands of assassins, were the deputies Isnard, Durand Maillane, and others. But although such frightful disorders and crimes still continued to disgrace the country, and though the people were still in a state of unequalled misery, the convention was nevertheless able triumph-

antly to resist every new assault. On the 1st Prairial, it had to meet a very formidable attack. The condemnation and death of Fouquier Tinville, and fifteen of the judges and jury of the revolutionary tribunal, produced great excitement among the people, whom hunger left no rest, and this excitement was again taken advantage of by some designing men, to lead them into an insurrection against the convention. On the morning of the 1st Prairial, the warlike sounds, which so often disturbed the capital, were again heard, and an immense multitude of men and women surrounded the Tuileries, forced the guards at the door, penetrated into the palace, and rushed into the hall of the convention, with the cry that had resounded since the commencement of the Revolution. "Bread, bread," resounded in the convention, in 1795, as it had resounded outside the palace of Versailles in 1789; and to the cries for bread were now added others for the constitution of '93. The alarmed deputies rushed up to the highest seats, where they were protected from the assailants by a few gendarmes. Boissy d'Anglas threw himself into the president's seat, and was immediately surrounded by pikes, guns, and sabres. The deputy Féraud, endeavoring to cover him with his body, was struck down by a ball from a pistol, dragged out of the room, and massacred, and his murderers then returned to present to Boissy the head of his defender. The scene equalled the most atrocious of the Revolution, and the trembling deputies, giving way to the fear it inspired, voted for all the propositions made by the mob, which were of a nature again to reinstate the system destroyed on the 9th Thermidor. Fortunately, the triumph of the mob was not of long duration; while coercing the convention, it forgot that the governing bodies, the committees, working in another wing of the palace, remained

free, and able to take measures against it. At the very moment when four commissaries, chosen by the people, were leaving the assembly to place themselves at the head of a provisional government, they were met by the Thermidorian sections and the *jeunesse dorée*, who attacked the mob and dispersed it. The convention then annulled the decrees that had been forced from it.

The mob, though dispersed for the moment, did not, however, lay down its arms, but returned on the morrow to engage in a new struggle with the sections; but the people were without leaders, and besides, had not that support from the other classes which they had formerly had. In a few days, the convention having taken vigorous measures, and having even threatened to bombard the faubourg St. Antoine, the foremost among the rioters, the people at last submitted, and from this period their power may be considered at an end. The middle classes had regained power, and though order was not to be triumphant in France before it was imposed by the strong hand of despotism, a more regular government was gradually being established. The great danger to the Republic now entirely arose from the royalists, who were aided by the listlessness in which long years of excitement and fear had ended, and who now had partisans, not alone in the sections, but even in the convention and in the committees. The idea of stability connected with an hereditary monarchy, began to lure those whom protracted anarchy had wearied with the name of liberty. The royalists considered themselves so near the consummation of their wishes, that they even thought of making preparations for the coronation of Louis XVIII., eldest brother of the murdered Louis, and the emigrants prepared for a descent in La Vendée.

The brilliant achievements of the Republican armies

in the year 1794, were followed in 1795 by a general discouragement, partly owing to the neglect of the government, which, having no longer the "energy of crime," was incapable of satisfying all the demands upon it, and the troops were left in a state of dreadful destitution. Their numbers were greatly diminished by desertion, and on all sides the French armies were beginning to retreat. The army of the Rhine had, however, its greatest enemy in its own bosom, for its commander, Pichegru, thinking the Republic lost, and won over by the promises of the Prince of Condé, was meditating treason.

The descent of the royalists on the coast of France was a complete failure. Prevented from landing in La Vendée, where Charette, who had broken his compact with the Republic, was prepared to receive them, they were obliged to disembark in Brittany, where the people, though attached to the royalist cause, were not as devoted as in La Vendée. General Hoche attacked the royalist army in the peninsula of Quiberon, and completely routed it; the English fleet that had brought it thither, and which was still hovering in the distance, being unable to approach and afford assistance. The royalists surrendered 21st July, 1795, but the convention having become aware of the growing strength of this party, ordered the death of the prisoners, and seven hundred and eleven emigrants were shot. Charette, ensconced in his camp at Belleville, responded to this atrocious measure by one as atrocious. He ordered two thousand republicans, who were in his power, to be put to death. The terrible blow received at Quiberon did not, however, suffice to crush the hopes of the emigrants, who still relied upon the party they had gained in the interior, and all their endeavors were now directed towards persuading the members of the commission of eleven

to introduce monarchical principles into the new constitution. But here they were again disappointed, for the commission presented to the people, on the 22d of August, 1795, a republican constitution, the fourth since 1789. According to this constitution, which was the work of the Girondins, the legislative power was confided to two councils, one composed of five hundred members above the age of thirty, and the other composed of two hundred and fifty members above forty years of age. These councils were both elected by electors named by the primary assemblies, and the third of the members were to be renewed every year. The first council was to propose, the second to sanction the laws, and the latter was also invested with the power of changing the residence of the legislative bodies, and of the executive. The executive power was confided to a directory of five members, having ministers, who were to be responsible. This directory was to be elected by the councils, and each year one member to be withdrawn, and a new one elected. The press, as well as all religious creeds, were to remain free; popular societies were prohibited; the laws against the emigrants declared irrevocable, &c.

This constitution was accepted by the convention. Wiser than the constituent assembly in this respect, the present assembly decreed that the new constitution should be put in force by its own body, and that two thirds of the new legislative council should be elected from among its members. The election of members from the convention was left to the people, but in case the electors refused, the convention was invested with the power of itself making the selection among its members.

These measures gave a severe blow to the royalists, who were now the only active party, as they had hoped

to be able so far to govern the elections as to ensure a majority of their own party, and the press now abounded with imprecations against that odious assembly, which was endeavoring to perpetuate its own dictatorship, and to destroy the sovereignty of the people. The days of 1789 seemed to have returned, but in an inverse direction. Orators presented themselves in great numbers; the journals, pamphlets, and other kinds of publications of the day left the convention no rest. In order to act in perfect concert, the assailants avoided all mention of the form of government they desired; but the legitimate king was uppermost in all minds, though none pronounced his name. All intrigues, however, were in vain; and though the sections of Paris, with a few exceptions, in accepting the constitution rejected the additional decrees, for once the departments did not follow the example of the capital. There the return of legal order satisfied the majority, and the desire for peace and tranquillity was so great, that the form of government had become indifferent. The constitution, together with the additional decrees, was accepted by a great majority in the primary assemblies, and the convention hastened to proclaim its victory, (23d September, 1795.)

The last resource of its opponents was now in insurrection, and they prepared for this by gathering together at Paris as many emigrants and *Chouans* as they could, and by rallying all the discontented about them. For several days preparations for an insurrection were going on in the capital, and when the convention endeavored to put a stop to them by arming a troop of Jacobins, the former agents of the reign of terror, the cries of the sections against the supporters of Robespierre became most violent, and a proclamation was issued by them, declaring that they had ceased to obey the orders of the con-



vention, and calling upon the people to arm. On the 4th October the convention declared itself *en permanence*, and directed General Menou to proceed against the insurgents. But the general, sympathizing more with the Parisians than with the convention, instead of taking decisive measures against them, entered into negotiations with them, and, confiding in their promise to disperse, withdrew his troops. The sections remained together, and their first attempt having been so feebly met, the Parisians began to think that they should gain an easy victory over the convention. But their assembly having dismissed Menou, and given the command to Barras, the general of the 9th Thermidor, this commander had chosen for his lieutenant the young general Bonaparte, a man who never took half-measures; and on the morrow, 13th Vendémiaire, (5th October, 1795,) the Tuileries and its environs were formed into a vast camp, the issues of which were garnished with cannon, and every disposition was made to deliver battle *à outrance* to the insurgents. At four o'clock in the evening the struggle commenced, and though the people were vastly superior in number, Bonaparte's cannon did such execution, that at nine o'clock the insurgents were completely routed.

The convention, which had been so severe against the terrorists, was extremely moderate towards the sections, limiting itself to disarming the section Lepelletier, which had been the leader in the insurrection, and to dismissing the staff and the *compagnie d'élite* of the National Guards. When this was done, all the prisoners were allowed to escape—one only was shot. However, when the correspondence of Louis XVIII. with his agents had been discovered, and it had been made evident that several of the members of the convention were in connection with him, it became necessary to take some farther measures

against the new attempts at a counter-revolution. Two Thermidorian deputies—Rovère and Saladin—who were convicted of having taken part in the revolt of the sections, were imprisoned, and General Aubry, accused of having favored the operations of the enemy, was ordered to be arrested. The exclusion of the relatives of emigrants from all legislative, judicial, and administrative functions was then pronounced; the laws against the transported priests were renewed; the incarcerated “patriots” released; and the elections being terminated, the convention having solemnly decreed the union of Belgium with France, and having issued an amnesty for all political offences, declared on the 26th October that its mission was terminated.

The directory, which immediately took its place, was a weak but regular government, having to struggle with the heaves and throes which for a long time continued to disturb the state, though the storm was laid. During its reign all prominent individualities in the interior disappeared, while the generals who carried the conquering arms of France into all countries, rose more and more into pre-eminence, and began to exercise a decided influence over matters in the interior. One name in particular became conspicuous, and the Revolution had attained its consummation, when Napoleon Bonaparte was crowned Emperor of France. Of the two inevitable consequences of anarchy—subjugation by a foreign foe, or despotism under an ambitious citizen—the least dreadful fell to the lot of France.







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